THE LIFE

OF

MANSIE WAUCH,

TAILOR IN DALKEITH.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH:
AND T. CADELL, LONDON.
MDCCCXXVIII.

TO

JOHN GALT, Esq.

OF GUELPH, UPPER CANADA,

AUTHOR OF "THE ANNALS OF THE PARISH,"

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING SKETCHES,

PRINCIPALLY OF HUMBLE SCOTTISH CHARACTER,

ARE DEDICATED,

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND AND ADMIRER.

THE EDITOR.

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PRELIMINARIES.

HAVING, within myself, made observation of late years, that all notable characters, whatsoever line of life they may have pursued, and to whatever business they might belong, have made a trade of committing to paper all the surprising occurrences and remarkable events that chanced to happen to them in the course of providence, during their journey through life—that such as come after them might take warning and be benefitted,—I have found it incumbent on me, following a right example, to do the same thing; and have set down, in black and white, a good few uncos,* that I should reckon will not soon be forgotten, provided they make as deep an impression on the world as they have done on me. To this decision I have been urged by the elbowing on of not a few judicious friends; among whom I would particularly remark James Batter, who

has been most earnest in his requeesht, and than whom a truer judge on anything connected with book-lear, or a better neibour, does not breathe the breath of life: both of which positions will, I doubt not, appear as clear as daylight to the reader, in the course of the work: to say nothing of the approval the scheme met with from the pious Maister Wiggie, who has now gone to his account, and divers other advisers, that wished either the general good of the world, or studied their own particular profit.

Had the course of my pilgrimage lain just on the beaten track, I would not—at least I think so—have been o'ercome by ony perswasions to do what I have done; but, as will be seen, in the twinkling of half an ee, by the judicious reader, I am a man that has witnessed much, and come through a great deal, both in regard to the times wherein I have lived, and the out-o-the-way adventures in which it has been my fortune to be engaged. Indeed, though I say it myself, who might as well be silent, I that have never stirred, in a manner so to speak, from home, have witnessed mair of the world we live in, and the doings of men, than many who have sailed the salt seas from the East Indies to the West; or, in the course of nature, visited

Greenland, Botany-Bay, or Van Dieman's Land. The cream of the matter, and to which we would solicit the attention of auld and young, rich and poor, is just this, that, unless unco doure indeed to learn, the inexperienced may glean from my pages sundry grand lessons, concerning what they have a chance to expect in the course of an active life; and the unsteady may take a hint concerning what it is possible for one of a clear head and a stout heart to go through with.

Notwithstanding, however, these plain and evident conclusions, even after writing the whole out, I thocht I felt a kind of a qualm of conscience about submitting an account of my actions and transactions to the world during my lifetime; and I had almost determined, for decency's sake, not to let the papers be printed till after I had been gathered to my fathers; but I took into consideration the duty that one man owes to another; and that my keeping back, and withholding these curious documents, would be in a great measure hindering the improvement of society, so far as I was myself personally concerned. Now this is a business, which James Batter agrees with me in thinking is carried on, furthered, and brought about, by every one furnishing his share of experience to the general stock. Let-a-be

this plain truth, another point of argument for my bringing out my bit book at the present time, is, that I am here to the fore bodily, with the use of my seven senses, to give day and date to all such as venture to put on the misbelieving front of Sadducees, with regard to any of the accidents, mischances, marvellous escapes, and extraordinary businesses therein related; and to shew them, as plain as the bool of a pint stoup, that ilka thing set down by me within its boards, is just as true, as that a blind man needs not spentacles, or that my name is Mansie Wauch.

Perhaps, as a person willing and anxious to give every man his due, it is necessary for me explicitly to mention, that, in the course of this book, I am indebted to my friend James Batter, for his able help in assisting me to spell the kittle words, and in rummaging out scraps of poem-books for head-pieces to my different chapters.



LIFE

OF

MANSIE WAUCH.

CHAPTER I.

OUR AULD GRANFAITHER.

The sun rises bright in France,
And fair sets he;
But he has tint the blithe blink he had
In my ain countree.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Some of the rich houses and great folk pretend to have histories of the auncientness of their families, which they can count back on their fingers amaist to the days of Noah's ark, and King Fergus the First; but, whatever may spunk out after, on this point, I am free to confess, with a safe conscience, that it is not in my power to come up within sight of them; having never seen or heard tell of ony body in our

connexion, farther back than auld granfaither, that I mind of when a laddie; and who it behoves to have belonged by birthright to some parish or other; but where-away, gude kens. James Batter mostly blinded both his een, looking all last winter for one of our name in the book of Martyrs, to make us proud of; but his search, I am free to confess, waur than failed—as the only man of the name he could find out, was a Serjeant Jacob Waugh, that lost his lug and his left arm, fighting like a Russian Turk against the godly, at the bluidy battle of the Pentland Hills.

Auld grandfaither died when I was a growing callant, some seven or eight year auld: yet I mind him full well; it being a curious thing how early matters take haud of one's memory. He was a straught, tall, auld man, with a shining bell-pow, and reverend white locks hinging down about his haffets; a Roman nose, and twa cheeks blooming through the winter of his lang age like roses, when, puir body, he was sand-blind with infirmity. In his latter days, he was hardly able to crawl about alone; but used to sit resting himself on the truff seat before our door, leaning forit his head on his staff, and finding a kind of pleasure in feeling the beams of God's ain sun beaking on him. A blackbird, that he had tamed, hung above his head in a whand-cage of my faither's making; and he had taken a pride in learning it to whistle twa three

turns of his ain favourite sang, "Oure the water to Charlie."

I recollect, as well as yesterday, that, on the Sundays, he wore a braid bannet with a red worsted cherry on the tap o't; and had a single-breasted coat, square in the tails, of light Gilmerton blue, with plaited white buttons, bigger than crown-pieces. His waistcoat was low in the neck, and had flap pouches, wherein he kept his mull for rappee, and his tobacco-box. To look at him, wi' his rig-and-fur Shetland hoes pulled up oure his knees, and his big glancing buckles in his shoon, sitting at our door-cheek, clean and tidy as he was kept, was just as if one of the auncient patriarchs had been left on earth, to let succeeding surveevors witness a picture of hoary and venerable eld. Puir body, many a bit Gibraltar-rock and gingebread did he give to me, as he would pat me on the head, and prophesy I would be a great man yet; and sing me bits of auld sangs about the bloody times of the Rebellion, and Prince Charlie. There was nothing that I liked so well as to hear him set a-going with his auld-warld stories and lilts; though my mother used sometimes to say, "Wheesht, granfaither, ye ken it's no canny to let out a word of thae things; let byganes be byganes, and forgotten." He never liked to gie trouble, so a rebuke of this kind would put a tether to his tongue for a wee; but, when we were left by ourselves, I used aye to egg him on to tell me what

he had come through in his far-away travels beyond the broad seas; and of the famous battles he had seen and shed his precious blood in; for his pinkie was hacked off by a dragoon of Cornel Gardener's, down by at Prestonpans, and he had catched a bullet with his ankle over in the north at Culloden. So it was no wonder that he liked to crack about these times, though they had brought him muckle and no little mischief, having obliged him to skulk like another Cain among the Hieland hills and heather, for many a long month and day, homeless and hungry. No dauring to be seen in his own country, where his head would have been chacked off like a sybo, he took leg-bail in a ship, over the sea, among the Dutch folk; where he followed out his lawful trade of a cooper, making girrs for the herring barrels, and so on; and sending, when he could find time and opportunity, such savings from his wages as he could afford, for the mainteenance of his wife and small family of three helpless weans, that he had been obligated to leave, dowie and destitute, at their native home of pleasant Dalkeith.

At lang and last, when the breeze had blown oure, and the feverish pulse of the country began to grow calm and cool, auld granfaither took a longing to see his native land; and, though not free of jeopardy from king's cutters on the sea, and from spies on shore, he risked his neck over in a sloop from Rotterdam to Aberlady, that came across with a val-

uable cargo of smuggled gin. When granfaither had been obliged to take the wings of flight for the preservation of his life and liberty, my faither was a wean at grannie's breast: so, by her fending—for she was a canny industrious body, and kept a bit shop, in the which she sold oatmeal and red herrings, needles and prins, potatoes, and tape, and cabbage, and what not—he had grown a strapping laddie of eleven or twelve, helping his two sisters, one of whom perished of the measles in the dear year, to gang errands, chap sand, carry water, and keep the housie clean. I have heard him say, when auld granfaither came to their door at the dead of night, tirling, like a thief o' darkness, at the window-brod to get in, that he was so altered in his voice and lingo, that no living soul kenned him, not even the wife of his bosom; so he had to put grannie in mind of things that had happened between them, before she would allow my faither to lift the sneck, or draw the bar. Many and many a year, for gude kens how long after, I've heard tell, that his speech was so Dutchified as to be scarcely kenspeckle to a Scotch European; but Nature is powerful, and, in the course of time, he came in the upshot to gather his words together like a Christian.

Of my auntie Bell, that, as I have just said, died of the measles in the dear year, at the age of fourteen, I have no story to tell but one, and that a short ane, though not without a sprinkling of interest.

Among her other ways of doing, grannie kept a cow, and sold the milk round about to the neibours in a pitcher, whiles carried by my faither, and whiles by my aunties, at the ransom of a ha'penny the mutchkin. Well, ye observe, that the cow ran yeild, and it was as plain as pease that she was with calf:—Geordie Drouth, the horse-doctor, could have made solemn affidavy on that head. So they waited on, and better waited on for the prowie's calfing, keeping it upon draff and ait-strae in the byre; till one morning every thing seemed in a fair way, and my auntie Bell was set out to keep watch and ward.

Some of her companions, howsoever, chancing to come by, took her out to the back of the house to have a game at the pallall; and, in the interim, Donald Bogie, the tinkler from Yetholm, came and left his little jackass in the byre, while he was selling about his crockery of cups and saucers, and brown plates, on the auld ane, thro' the town, in two creels.

In the middle of auntie Bell's game, she heard an unco noise in the byre; and, kenning that she had neglected her charge, she ran round the gable, and opened the door in a great hurry; when, seeing the beastie, she pulled it to again, and fleeing, half out of breath, into the kitchen, cried—"Come away, come away, mother, as fast as ye can. Ay, lyst, the cow's cauffed,—and it's a cuddie!"

CHAPTER II.

MY AIN FAITHER.

The weaver he gied up the stair,
Dancing and singing ;
A bunch o' bobbins at his back,
Rattling and ringing.

Old Song.

My own faither, that is to say, auld Mansie Wauch, with regard to myself, but young Mansie, with reference to my granfaither, after having run the errands, and done his best to grannie during his early years, was, at the age of thirteen, as I have heard him tell, bound a prentice to the weaver trade, which, from that day and date, for better for worse, he prosecuted to the hour of his death :—I should rather have said to within a fortnight o't, for he lay for that time in the mortal fever, that cut through the thread of his existence. Alas ! as Job says, " How time flies like a weaver's shuttle !"

He was a tall, thin, lowering man, blackavised, and something in the physog like myself, though

scarcely so weil-faured; with a kind of blueness about his chin, as if his beard grew of that colour—which I scarcely think it would do—but might arise either from the dust of the blue cloth, constantly flying about the shop, taking a rest there, or from his having a custom of giving it a rub now and then with his finger and thumb, both of which were dyed of that colour, as well as his apron, from rubbing against, and handling the webs of checkit claith in the loom.

Ill would it become me, I trust a dutiful son, to say that my faither was any thing but a decent, industrious, hard-working man, doing every thing for the good of his family, and winning the respect of all that kenned the value of his worth. As to his decency, few—very few indeed—laid beneath the mools of Dalkeith kirk-yard, made their beds there, leaving a better name behind them; and as to industry, it is but little to say that he toiled the very flesh off his bones, caaing the shuttle from Monday morning till Saturday night, from the rising up of the sun, even to the going down thereof; and whiles, when opportunity led him, or occasion required, digging and delving away at the bit kail-yard, till moon and stars were in the lift, and the dews of heaven that fell on his head, were like the oil that flowed from Aaron's beard, even to the skirts of his garment. But what will ye say there? Some are born with a silver spoon in their mouths, and others

with a parritch-stick. Of the latter was my faither; for, with all his fechting, he never was able much more than to keep our heads above the ocean of debt. Whatever was denied him, a kind providence, howsoever, enabled him to do that; and so he departed this life contented, leaving to my mother and me, the two survivors, the prideful remembrance of being, respectively, she the widow, and me the son of an honest man. Some left with twenty thousand cannot boast as much; so ilka ane has their comforts.

Having never entered much into public life, farther than attending the kirk twice every sabbath—and thrice when there was evening service—the days of my faither glided over like the waters of a deep river that make little noise in their course; so I do not know whether to lament or to rejoice at having almost nothing to record of him. Had Buonaparte as little ill to account for, it would be well this day for him:—but, losh me! I had amaist skipped over his wedding.

In the five-and-twentieth year of his age, he had fallen in love with my mother, Marion Laverock, at the Christening of a neibour's bairn, where they both happened to forgather, little, I daresay, jealousing, at the time their een first met, that fate had destined them for a pair, and to be the honoured parents of me, their only bairn. Seeing my faither's heart was catched as in the net of the fowler, she

took every lawful means, such as adding another knot to her cockernony, putting up her hair in screw curls, and so on, to follow up her advantage; the result of all which was, that, after a three months' courtship, she wrote a letter out to her friends at Loanhead, telling them of what was more than likely to happen, and giving a kind invitation to such of them as might think it worth their whiles, to come in and be spectators of the ceremony.—And a prime day I am told they had of it, having, by advice of more than one, consented to make it a penny-wedding; and hiring Deacon Laurie's maltbarn for five shillings, for the express purpose.

Many yet living, among whom are James Batter, who was the best-man, and Duncan Imrie, the heel-cutter in the Flesh-Market Close, are yet above board to bear solemn testimony to the grandness of the occasion, and the unaccountable numerousness of the company, with such a display of mutton-broth, swimming thick with raisins,—and roasted jiggets of lamb,—to say nothing of mashed turnips and champed potatoes,—as had not been seen in the wide parish o' Dalkeith in the memory of man. It was not only my faither's bridal-day, but it brought many a lad and lass together by way of partners at foursome reels and hieland jigs, whose courtship did not end in smoke, couple above couple dating the day of their happiness from that famous forgathering. There were no less than three fiddlers, two of

them blind with the sma'-pox, and one naturally, and a piper with his drone and chanter, playing as many pibrochs as would have deaved a mill-happer, —all skirling, scraping, and bumming away throughither, the whole afternoon and night, and keeping half the country-side dancing, capering, and cutting, in strathspey step and quick time, as if they were without a weary, or had not a bone in their bodies. In the days of darkness, the whole concern would have been imputed to magic and glamour; and douce folk, finding how they were transgressing over their usual bounds, would have looked about them for the wooden pin that auld Michael Scott the warlock drave in behind the door, leaving the family to dance themselves to death at their leisure.

Had the business ended in dancing, so far well, for a sound sleep would have brought a blithe wakening, and all be tight and right again; but, alas and alackaday, the violent heat and fume of foment they were all thrown into, caused the emptying of so many ale-tankers, and the swallowing of so muckle toddy, by way of cooling and refreshing the company, that they all got as fou as the Baltic; and many ploys, that shall be nameless, were the result of a sober ceremony, whereby two douce and decent people, Mansie Wauch, my honoured faither, and Marion Laverock, my respected mother, were linked thegither, for better for worse, in the lawful bonds of honest wedlock.

It seems as if Providence, reserving every thing famous and remarkable for me, allowed little or nothing of consequence to happen to my father, who had few cruiks in his lot; at least I never learned, either from him or any other body, of any adventures likely seriously to interest the world at large. I have heard tell, indeed, that he once got a terrible fright by taking the bounty, during the American war, from an Eirish corporal, of the name of Dochart O'Flaucherty, at Dalkeith Fair, when he was at his prenticeship: he, no being accustomed to malt-liquor, having got fouish and frisky—which was not his natural disposition—over a half a bottle of porter. From this it will easily be seen, in the first place, that it would be with a fecht that his master would get him off, by obleeging the corporal to take back the trepan money; in the second place, how long a date back it is since the Eirish began to be the death of us; and, in conclusion, that my honoured father got such a fleg, as to spain him effectually, for the space of ten years, from every drinkable stronger than good spring-well water. Let the unwary take caution; and may this be a wholesome lesson to all whom it may concern.

In this family history it becomes me, as an honest man, to make passing mention of my faither's sister, auntie Mysie, that married a carpenter and undertaker in the town of Jedburgh; and who, in the course of nature and industry, came to be in a

prosperous and thriving way; indeed, so much so, as to be raised from the rank of a private head of a family, and at last elected, by a majority of two votes, a member of the town-council itself.

There is a good story, howsoever, connected with this business, with which I shall make myself free to wind up this somewhat fusty and fushionless chapter.

Well, ye see, some great lord,—I forget his name, but no matter,—that had made a most tremendous sum of money, either by foul or fair means, among the blacks in the East Indies, had returned, before he died, to lay his bones at home, as yellow as a Limerick glove, and as rich as Dives in the New Testament. He kept flunkies with plush small-clothes, and sky-blue coats with scarlet-velvet cuffs and collars,—lived like a princie,—and settled, as I said before, in the neighbourhood of Jedburgh.

The body, though as brown as a toad's back, was as prideful and full of power as auld King Nebuchadneisher; and how to exhibit all his purple and fine linen, he aye thought and better thought, till at last the happy determination came over his mind like a flash of lightning, to invite the bailies, deacons, and town-council, all in a body, to come and dine with him.

Save us! what a brushing of coats, such a switching of stoury trowsers, and bleaching of white cotton stockings, as took place before the catastrophe

of the feast, never before happened since Jeddart was a burgh. Some of them that were forward, and geyan bold in the spirit, crawed aloud for joy, at being able to boast that they had received an invitation letter to dine with a great lord; while others, as proud as peacocks of the honour, yet not very sure as to their being up to the trade of behaving themselves at the tables of the great, were mostly dung stupid with not kenning what to think. A council meeting or two took place in the gloamings, to take such a serious business into consideration; some expressing their fears and inward doun-sinking, while others cheered them up with a fillip of pleasant consolation. Scarcely a word of the matter for which they were summoned together by the town offisher—and which was about the mending of the old bell-rope—was discussed by any of them. So after a sowd of toddy was swallowed, with the hopes of making them brave men, and good soldiers of the magistracy, they all plucked up a proud spirit, and, do or die, determined to march in a body up to the gate, and forward to the table of his lordship.

My uncle, who had been one of the ringleaders of the chicken-hearted, crap away up among the rest, with his new blue coat on, shining fresh from the ironing of the goose, but keeping well among the thick, to be as little kenspeckle as possible; for all the folk of the town were at their doors and windows to witness the great occasion of the town-

council, going away up like gentlemen of rank to take their dinner with his lordship. That it was a terrible trial to all cannot be for a moment denied; yet some of them behaved themselves decently; and, if we confess that others trembled in the knees, as if they were marching to a field of battle, it was all in the course of human nature.

Yet ye would wonder how they came on by degrees; and, to cut a long tale short, at length found themselves in a great big room, like a palace in a fairy tale, full of grand pictures with gold frames, and looking-glasses like the side of a house, where they could see down to their very shoes. For a while they were like men in a dream, perfectly dazzled, and dumbfoundered; and it was five minutes before they could either see a seat, or think of sitting down. With the reflection of the looking-glasses, one of the bailies was so possessed within himself, that he tried to chair himself where chair was none, and landed, not very softly, on the carpet; while another of the deacons, a fat and dumpy man, as he was trying to make a bow, and throw out his leg behind him, stramped on a favourite Newfoundland dog's tail, that, wakening out of its slumbers with a yell that made the roof ring, played drive against my uncle, who was standing abaft, and wheeled him like a butterflee, side foremost, against a table with a heap o' flowers on't, where, in trying to kep himself, he drove his head, like a battering-

ram, through a looking-glass, and bleached back on his hands and feet on the carpet.

Seeing what had happened, they were all frightened; but his lordship, after laughing heartily, was politer, and kent better about manners than all that; so, bidding the flunkies hurry away with the fragments of the china jugs and jars, they found themselves, sweating with terror and vexation, ranged along silk settees, cracking about the weather and other wonderfuls.

Such a dinner! the fume of it went round about their hearts like myrrh and frankincense. The landlord took the head of the table, the bailies the right and left of him; the deacons and councillors were ranged along the sides, like files of sodgers; and the chaplain, at the foot, said grace. It is entirely out of the power of man to set doun on paper all that they got to eat and drink; and such was the effect of French cookery, that they did not ken fish from flesh. Howsoever, for all that, they laid their lugs in every thing that lay before them, and what they could not eat with forks they supped with spoons; so it was all to one purpose.

When the dishes were removing, each had a large blue glass bowl full of water, and a clean calendered damask towel, put down by a smart flunky before him; and many of them that had not helped themselves well to the wine, while they were eating their steaks and French frigassees, were now vexed to

death on that score, imagining that nothing remained for them, but to dight their nebs and flee up.

Ignorant folk should not judge rashly, and the worthy town-council were here in error; for their surmises, however feasible, did the landlord wrong. In a minute they had fresh wine decanters ranged down before them, filled with liquors of all variety of colours, red, green, and blue; and the table was covered with dishes full of jargonelles and pippins, raisins and almonds, shell-walnuts, and plumdamases, and nut-crackers, and every thing they could think of eating; so that after drinking "The King, and long life to him," and "The constitution of the country at home and abroad," and "Success to trade," and "A good harvest," and "May ne'er waur be among us," and "Botheration to the French," and "Corny toes and short shoes to the foes of old Scotland," and so on, their tongues began at length not to be so tacked; and the weight of their own dignity, that had taken flight before his lordship, came back and rested on their shoulders.

In the course of the evening, his lordship whispered to one of the flunkies to bring in some things—they could not hear what—as the company might like them. The wise ones thought within themselves that the best aye comes hindmost; so in brushed a powdered valet, with three dishes on his arm

of twisted black things, just like sticks of Gibraltar-rock, but different in the colour.

Bailie Bowie helped himself to a jargonelle, and Deacon Purvis to a wheen raisins; and my uncle, to shew that he was not frighted, and kent what he was about, helped himself to one of the long black things, which without much ceremony he shoved into his mouth, and began to. Two or three more, seeing that my uncle was up to trap, followed his example, and chewed away like nine-year olds.

Instead of the curious-looking black thing being sweet as honey—for so they expected—they soon found they had catched a Tartar; for it had a confounded bitter tobacco-taste. Manners, however, forbade them laying them down again, more especially as his lordship, like a man dumfoundered, was aye keeping his eye on them. So away they chewed, and better chewed, and whammelled them round in their mouths, first in one cheek, and then in the other, taking now and then a mouthful of drink to wash the trash down, then chewing away again, and syne another whammel from one cheek to the other, and ... another mouthful, while the whole time ... een were staring in their heads like mad, and ... faces they made may be imagined, but cannot be described. His lordship gave his eyes a rub, and thought he was dreaming; but no—there they were bodily, chewing, and whammelling, and making

faces; so no wonder that, in keeping in his laugh, he sprung a button from his waistcoat, and was like to drop down from his chair, through the floor, in an ecstacy of astonishment, seeing they were all growing sea-sick, and pale as stucco-images.

Frightened out of his wits at last, that he would be the death of the whole council, and that more of them would pushion themselves, he took up one of the segars—every one knows segars now, for they are fashionable among the very sweeps—which he lighted at the candle, and commenced puffing like a tobacco-pipe.

My uncle and the rest, if they were ill before, were worse now; so when they got to the open air, instead of growing better they grew sicker and sicker, till they were waggling from side to side like ships in a storm; and, no kenning whether their heels or heads were uppermost, went spinning round about like pieries.

"A little spark may make muckle wark." It is perfectly wonderful what great events spring out of trifles, or what seem to common eyes but trifles. I do not allude to the nine days' deadly sickness, that was the legacy of every one that ate his segar, but to the awful truth, that, at the next election of councillors, my poor uncle Jamie was completely blackballed—a general spite having been taken to him in the town-hall, on account of having led the magistracy wrong, by doing what he ought to have

let alone, thereby making himself and the rest a topic of amusement to the world at large, for many and many a month.

Others, to be sure, it becomes me to make mention, have another version of the story, and impute the cause of his having been turned out to the implacable wrath of old Bailie Bogie, whose best black coat, square in the tails, that he had worn only on the Sundays for nine year, was totally spoiled, on their way home in the dark from his lordships, by a tremendous blash, that my unfortunate uncle happened, in the course of nature, to let flee in the frenzy of a deadly upthrowing.

CHAPTER III.

COMING INTO THE WORLD.

———— At first the babe
Was sickly; and a smile was seen to pass
Across the midwife's cheek, when, holding up
The feeble wretch, she to the father said,
"A fine man child!" What else could they expect?
The father being, as I said before,
A weaver.

Hogg's *Poetic Mirror.*

I have no distinct recollection of the thing myself, yet there is every reason to believe that I was born on the 15th of October, 1765, in that little house, standing by itself, not many yards from the eastmost side of the Flesh-Market Gate, Dalkeith. My eyes opened on the light about two o'clock in a dark and rainy morning. Long was it spoken about that something great and mysterious would happen on that dreary night; as the cat, after washing her face, gaed mewing about, with her tail sweeing behind her like a ramrod; and a corbie, from the Duke's woods, tumbled down Jamie Elder's lum, when he

had set the little still a-going—giving them a terrible fright, as they first took it for the deevil, and then for an exciseman—and fell with a great cloud of soot, and a loud skraigh, into the empty kail-pot.

The first thing that I have any clear memory of, was my being carried out on my auntie's shoulder, with a leather cap tied under my chin, to see the Fair Race. Oh! but it was a grand sight! I have read since then the story of Aladdin's Wonderful Lamp, but this beat it all to sticks. There was a long row of tables, covered with carpets of bonny patterns, heaped from one end to the other with shoes of every kind and size, some with polished soles, and some glittering with sparribles and cuddy-heels; and little red worsted boots for bairns, with blue and white edgings, hinging like strings of flowers up the posts at each end;—and then what a collection of luggies! the whole meal in the market-sacks on a Thursday did not seem able to fill them;—and horn-spoons, green and black freckled, with shanks clear as amber,—and timber caups,—and ivory egg-cups of every pattern. Have a care of us! all the eggs in Smeaton dairy might have found resting places for their doups in a row. As for the ginger-bread, I shall not attempt a description. Sixpenny and shilling cakes, in paper, tied with skinie; and roundabouts, and snaps, brown and white quality, and parliaments, on stands covered with calendered linen, clean from the fold. To pass it was just im-

possible; it set my teeth a-watering, and I skirled like mad, until I had a gilded lady thurst into my little nieve; the which, after admiring for a minute, I applied my teeth to, and of the head I made no bones; so that in less than no time, she had vanished, petticoats and all, no trace of her being to the fore, save and except long treacly daubs, extending east and west from ear to ear, and north and south from cape neb of the nose to the extremity of beardy-land.

But what, of all things, attracted my attention on that memorable day, was the show of cows, sheep, and horses, mooing, baaing, and neighering; and the race—that was best! Od, what a sight!—we were jammed in the crowd of auld wives, with their toys and shining ribbons; and carter lads, with their blue bonnets; and young wenches, carrying home their fairings in napkins, as muckle as would hold their teeth going for a month;—there scarcely could be muckle for love, when there was so much for the stomach;—and men, with wooden legs, and brass virls at the end of them, playing on the fiddle,—and a bear that roared, and danced on its hind feet, with a muzzled mouth,—and Punch and Polly,—and puppie-shows, and mair than I can tell,—when up came the horses to the starting-post. I shall never forget the bonny dresses of the riders. One had a napkin tied round his head, with the flaps fleeing behind him; and his coat-tails were curled up into

a big hump behind; it was so tight buttoned ye wadna thought he could have breathed. His corduroy trowsers (such like as I have often since made to growing callants) were tied round his ankles with a string; and he had a rusty spur on one shoe, which I saw a man take off to lend him. Save us! how he pulled the beast's head by the bridle, and flapped up and down on the saddle when he tried a canter! The second one had on a black velvet hunting-cap, and his coat stripped. I wonder he was not feared of cauld, his shirt being like a riddle, and his nether nankeens but thin for such weather; but he was a brave lad; and sorry were the folks for him, when he fell off in taking ower sharp a turn, by which auld Pullen, the bell-ringer, wha was holding the post, was made to coup the creels, and got a bloody nose.—And but the last was a wearyful one! He was all life, and as gleg as an eel. Up and down he went; and up and down gaed the beast on its hind-legs and its fore-legs, funking like mad; yet though he was not aboon thirteen, or fourteen at most, he did not cry out for help more than five or six times, but grippit at the mane with one hand, and at the back of the saddle with the other, till daft Robie, the hostler at the stables, claught hold of the beast by the head, and off they set. The young birkie had neither hat nor shoon, but he did not spare the stick; round and round they flew like daft. Ye would have thought their een would have loupen

out; and loudly all the crowd were hurraing, when young hatless came up foremost, standing in the stirrups, the long stick between his teeth, and his white hair fleeing behind him in the wind like streamers on a frosty night.

CHAPTER IV.

CALF-LOVE.

Bonny lassie, will ye go, will ye go, will ye go,
Bonny lassie, will ye go to the Birks of Aberfeldy?

BURNS.

For a tailor is a man, a man, a man,
And a tailor is a man.

Popular Song.

THE long and the short is, that I was sent to school, where I learned to read and spell, making great progress in the Single's and Mother's Carritch. Na, what is more, few could fickle me in the Bible, being mostly able to spell it all over, save the second of Ezra and the seventh of Nehemiah, which the Dominie himself could never read through twice in the same way.

My father, to whom I was born, like Isaac to Abraham, in his old age, was an elder in the Relief Kirk, respected by all for his canny and douce behaviour, and, as I have observed before, a weaver to his trade. The cot and the kail-yard were his

own, and had been auld granfaither's; but still he had to ply the shuttle from Monday to Saturday, to keep all right and tight. The thrums were a perquisite of my own, which I niffered with the gundy-wife for Gibraltar rock, cut-throat, gib, or bulls-eyes.

Having come into the world before my time, and being of a pale face and delicate make, Nature never could have intended me for the naval or military line, or for any robustious trade or profession whatsoever. No, no, I never liked fighting in my life; peace was aye in my thoughts. When there was any riot in the streets, I fled, and scougged myself at the chumley-lug as quickly as I dowed; and, rather than double a nieve to a school-fellow, I pocketed many shabby epithets, got my paiks, and took the coucher's blow from laddies that could hardly reach up to my waistband.

Just after I was put to my 'prenticeship, having made free choice of the tailoring trade, I had a terrible stound of calf-love. Never shall I forget it. I was growing up, long and lank as a willow-wand. Brawns to my legs there were none, as my trowsers of other years too visibly effected to show. The long yellow hair hung down, like a flax-wig, the length of my lantern jaws, which looked, notwithstanding my yapness and stiff appetite, as if eating and they had broken up acquaintanceship. My blue jacket seemed in the sleeves to have picked a quar-

rel with the wrists, and had retreated to a tait below the elbows. The haunch-buttons, on the contrary, appeared to have taken a strong liking to the shoulders, a little below which they showed their tarnished brightness. At the middle of the back the tails terminated, leaving the well-worn rear of my corduroys, like a full moon seen through a dark haze. Oh! but I must have been a bonny lad.

My first flame was the minister's lassie, Jess, a buxom and forward quean, two or three years older than myself. I used to sit looking at her in the kirk, and felt a droll confusion when our een met. It dirled through my heart like a dart, and I looked down at my psalm-book sheepish and blushing. Fain would I have spoken to her, but it would not do; my courage aye failed me at the pinch, though she whiles gave me a smile when she passed me. She used to go to the well every night with her twa stoups, to draw water after the manner of the Israelites at gloaming; so I thought of watching to give her the two apples which I had carried in my pouch for more than a week for that purpose. How she laughed when I stappit them into her hand, and brushed bye without speaking! I stood at the bottom of the close listening, and heard her laughing till she was like to split. My heart flap-flappit in my breast like a pair of fanners. It was a moment of heavenly hope; but I saw Jamie Coom, the blacksmith, who I aye jealoused was my rival, coming

down to the well. I saw her give him one of the apples; and hearing him say, with a loud gaffaw, "Where is the tailor?" I took to my heels, and never stopped till I found myself on the little stool by the fireside, and the hamely sound of my mother's wheel bum-bumming in my lug, like a gentle lullaby.

Every noise I heard flustered me, but I calmed in time, though I went to my bed without my supper. When I was driving out the gaislings to the grass on the next morn, who was it my ill fate to meet but the blacksmith. "Ou, Mansie," said Jamie Coom, "are ye gaun to take me for your best man? I hear you are to be cried in the kirk on Sunday?"

"Me!" answered I, shaking and staring.

"Yes!" said he, "Jess the minister's maid told me last night, that you had been giving up your name at the manse. Ay, it's ower true—for she showed me the apples ye gied her in a present. This is a bonny story, Mansie, my man, and you only at your prenticeship yet."

Terror and despair had struck me dumb. I stood as still and as stiff as a web of buckram. My tongue was tied, and I could not contradict him. Jamie faulded his arms, and gaed away whistling, turning every now and then his sooty face over his shoulder, and mostly sticking his tune, as he could not keep his mouth screwed for laughing. What would I not have given to have laughed too!

There was no time to be lost; this was the Satur-

day. The next rising sun would shine on the Sabbath. Ah, what a case I was in! I could mostly have drowned myself, had I not been frighted. What could I do? My love had vanished like lightning; but oh, I was in a terrible gliff! Instead of gundy, I sold my thrums to Mrs. Walnut for a penny, with which I bought at the counter a sheet of paper and a pen; so that in the afternoon I wrote out a letter to the minister, telling him what I had been given to hear, and begging him, for the sake of mercy, not to believe Jess's word, as I was not able to keep a wife, and as she was a leeing gipsy.

CHAPTER V.

CURSECOWL.

From his red poll a redder cowl hung down;
His jacket, if thro' grease we guess, was brown;
A vigorous scamp, some forty summers old;
Rough Shetland stockings up his thighs were rolled;
While at his side horn-handled steels and knives
Gleamed from his pouch, and thirsted for sheep's lives.
ODOHERTY'S *Miscellanea Classica.*

BUT, losh me! I have come on ower far already, before mentioning a wonderful thing that happened to me when I was only seven year old. Few things in my eventful life have made a deeper impression on me than what I am going to relate.

It was the custom, in those times, for the different schools to have cock-fighting on Fastern's E'en; and the victor, as he was called, treated the other scholars to a football. Many a dust have I seen rise out of that business—broken shins and broken heads, sore bones, and sound duckings—but this was none of these.

Our next neighbour was a flesher; and right before the window was a large stone, on which auld wives with their weans would sometimes take a rest; so what does I, when I saw the whole hobble-shaw coming fleeing down the street, with the kick-ba' at their noses, but up I speels upon the stone, (I was a wee chap with a daidley, a ruffled shirt, and leather cap edged with rabbit fur,) that I might see all the fun. This one fell, and that one fell, and a third was knocked over, and a fourth got a bloody nose; and so on; and there was such a noise and din, as would have deaved the workmen of Babel—when, lo! and behold! the ball played bounce mostly at my feet, and the whole mob after it. I thought I should have been dung to pieces; so I pressed myself back with all my might, and through went my elbow into Cursecowl's kitchen. It did not stick long there. Before ye could say Jack Robison, out flew the flesher in his killing-claiths; his face was as red as fire, and he had his pouch full of bloody knives buckled to his side. I skreighed out in his face when I looked at him, but he did not stop a moment for that. With a girn that was like to rive his mouth, he twisted his nieve in the back of my hair, and off with me hinging by the cuff of the neck, like a kittling. My een were like to loup out of my head, but I had no breath to cry. I heard him thraw the key, for I could not look down, the skin of my face was pulled so tight; and in he flang

me like a pair of auld boots into his booth, where I landed on my knees upon a raw bloody calf's skin. I thought I would have gone out of my wits, when I heard the door locked upon me, and looked round me in sic an unyearthly place. It had only one sparred window, and there was a garden behind; but how was I to get out? I danced round and round about, stamping my heels on the floor, and rubbing my begritten face with my coat-sleeve. To make matters worse, it was wearing to the darkening. The floor was all covered with lappered blood, and sheep and calf skins. The calves and the sheep themselves, with their cuttit throats, and glazed een, and ghastly girning faces, were hanging about on pins, heels uppermost. Losh me! I thought on Bluebeard and his wives in the bloody chamber!

And all the time it was growing darker and darker, and more dreary; and all was quiet as death itself. It looked, by all the world, like a grave, and me buried alive within it; till the rottens came out of their holes to lick the blood, and whisked about like wee evil spirits. I thought on my father, and my mother, and how I should never see them more; for I was sure that Cursecowl would come in the dark, tie my hands and feet thegither, and lay me across the killing-stool. I grew more and more frightened; and it grew more and more dark. I thought all the sheep-heads were looking at ane anither, and then girn-girning at me. At last I grew desperate; and my

hair was as stiff as wire, though it was as wet as if I had been douking in the Esk. I began to bite through the wooden spars with my teeth, and rugged at them with my nails, till they were like to come off—but no, it would not do. At length, when I had greeted myself mostly blind, and cried till I was as hoarse as a corbie, I saw auld Janet Hogg taking in her bit claiths from the bushes, and I reeled and screamed till she heard me.—It was like being transported into heaven; for, in less than no time, my mother, with her apron at her een, was at the door; and Cursecowl, with a candle in the front of his hat, had scarcely thrawn the key, when out I flew, and she lifted up her foot, (I dare say it was the first and last time in her life, for she was a douce woman,) and gave him such a kick and a push, that he played bleach over, head foremost; and, as we ran down the close, we heard him cursing and swearing, in the dark, like a devil incarnate.

CHAPTER VI.

PUSHING MY FORTUNE.

Oh, love, love, lassie,
Love is like a dizziness,
It winna let a puir bodie
Gang about their business.
JAMES HOGG.

THE days of the years of my 'prenticeship having glided cannily over on the working-board of my respected maister, James Hosey, where I sat working cross-legged like a busy bee, in the true spirit of industrious contentment, I found myself, at the end of the seven year, so well instructed in the tailoring trade, to which I had paid a near-sighted attention, that, without more ado, I girt myself round about with a proud determination of at once cutting my mother's apron string, and venturing to go without a hold. Thinks I to myself "faint heart never won fair lady;" so, taking my stick in my hand, I set out towards Edinburgh, as brave as a Hielander, in search of a journeyman's place. When I think

how many have been out of bread, month after month, making vain application at the house of call, I may set it down to an especial providence, that I found one, on the very first day, to my heart's content, in by at the Grassmarket, where I stayed for the space of six calendar months.

Had it not been from a real sense of the duty I owed to my future employers, whomsoever they might be, in making myself a first-rate hand in the cutting, shaping, and sewing line, I would not have found courage in my breast to have helped me out through such a long and dreary time. The change from our own town, where ilka face was friendly, and where I could ken every man I saw, by the cut of his coat, at half a mile's distance, to the bum and bustle o' the High Street, the tremendous cannons of the Castle packed full of soldiers ready for war, and the filthy, ill-smelling abominations of the Cowgate, where I put up, was amaist more than could be tholed by man of woman born. My lodging was up six pair of stairs, in a room of Widow Randie's, which I rented for half-a-crown a-week, coals included; and many a time, after putting out my candle, before stepping into my bed, I used to look out at the window, where I could see thousands and thousands of lamps, spreading for miles adown streets and through squares, where I did not ken a living soul; and dreeing the awful and insignificant sense of being a lonely stranger in a foreign land. Then

would the memory of past days return to me; yet I had the same trust in heaven as I had before, seeing that they were the dividual stars above my head which I used to glour up at in wonder at Dalkeith —pleasant Dalkeith! aye how different, with its bonny river Esk, its gardens full of gooseberry bushes and pear trees, its grass parks, spotted with sheep, and its grand green woods, from the bullying blackguards, the comfortless reek, and the nasty gutters of the Netherbow.

To those, nevertheless, that take the world as they find it, there are pleasures in all situations; nor was mine, bad though I allow it to be, entirely destitute of them; for our work-room being at the top of the stairs, and the light of heaven coming down through sky-lights, three in number, we could, by putting out our heads, have a vizzy of the grand auncient building of George Heriot's Hospital, with the crowds of young laddies playing through the green parks, with their bit green coaties, and shining leather caps, like a wheen puddocks;—and all the sweet country out by Barrowmuirhead, and thereaway; together with the Corstorphine Hills—and the Braid Hills—and the Pentland Hills—and all the rest of the hills, covered here and there with tufts of blooming whins, as yellow as the beaten gold—spotted round about their bottoms with green trees, and growing corn, but with tops as bare as a gaberlunzie's coat—kepping the rowling clouds on

their awful shouthers on cold and misty days; and freckled over with the flowers of the purple heather, on which the shy moor-fowl take a delight to fatten and fill their craps, through the cosey months of the blythe summer time.

Let nobody take it amiss, yet I must bear witness to the truth, though the de'il should have me. My heart was sea-sick of Edinburgh folk and town manners, for the which I had no stomach. I could form no friendly acquaintanceship with a living soul; so I abode by myself, like St. John in the isle of Patmos, on spare allowance, making a sheep-head serve me for three days' kitchen. I longed like a sailor that has been long at sea, and wasted and weather-beaten, to see once more my native home; and, bundling up, flee from the noisy stramash to the loun dykeside of domestic privacy. Every thing around me seemed to smell of sin and pollution, like the garments of the Egyptians with the ten plagues; and often, after I took off my claes to lie down in my bed, when the watchmen that guarded us through the night in blue dreadnoughts with red necks, and battons, and horn-bouets, from thieves, murderers, and pickpockets, were bawling "half-past ten o'-clock," did I commune with my own heart, and think within myself, that I would rather be a sober, poor, honest man in the country, able to clear my day and way by the help of providence, than the Provost himself, my lord though he be, or even the

Mayor of London, with his velvet gown trailing for yards in the glaur behind him—do what he likes to keep it up; or riding about the streets—as Joey Smith the Yorkshire jockey, to whom I made a hunting-cap, told me—in a coach made of clear crystal, and wheels of the beaten gold.

It was an awful business; dog on it, I aye wonder yet how I got through with it. There was no rest for soul or body, by night or day, with police officers crying "one o'clock, an' a frosty morning," knocking Eirishmen's teeth down their throats with their battons, hauling limmers by the lug and horn into the lock-up-house, or over by to Bridewell, where they were set to beat hemp for a small wage, and got their heads shaved; with carters bawling, "ye yo, yellow sand, yellow sand," with mouths as wide as a barn-door, and voices that made the drums of your ears dirl, and ring again like mad; with fishwives from Newhaven, Cockenzie, and Fisherrow, skirling "roug-a-rug, warstling herring," as if every one was trying to drown out her neibour, till the very landladies at the top of the seventeen storey houses, could hear, if they liked to be fashed, and might come down at their leisure to buy them at three for a-penny; men from Barnton, and thereaway on the Queensferry road, halloing "Sour douk, sour douk;" tinklers skirmishing the edges of brown plates, they were trying to make the auld

wives buy—and what not. To me it was a real hell upon earth.

Never let us repine, howsomever, but consider that all is ordered for the best. The sons of the patriarch Jacob found out their brother Joseph in a foreign land, and where they least expected it; so it was here—even here where my heart was sickening unto death, from my daily and nightly thoughts being as bitter as gall—that I fell in with the greatest blessing of my life, Nanse Cromie!

In the flat below our workshop lived Mrs. Whitterraick, the wife of Mr. Whitteraick, a dealer in hens and hams in the poultry market, that had been fallen in with, when her gudeman was riding out on his bit sheltie in the Lauder direction, bargaining with the farmers for their ducks, chickens, gaislings, geese, turkey-pouts, howtowdies, guinea-hens, and other barn-door fowls; and, among his other calls, having happened to make a transaction with her father, anent some Anchovy-ducks, he, by a warm invitation, was kindly pressed to remain for the night.

The upshot of the business was, that on mounting his pony to make the best of his way home, next morning after breakfast, Maister Whitteraick found he was shot through the heart with a stound of love; and that, unless a suitable remedy could be got, there was no hope for him on this side of time,

let alone blowing out his brains, or standing before the minister. Right it was in him to run the risk of deciding on the last; and so well did he play his game, that, in two months from that date, after sending sundry presents on his part to the family, of smeaked hams and salt tongues,—acknowledged on theirs, by return of carrier, in the shape of sucking pigs, jargonelle pears, and such like,—matters were southered; and Miss Jeanie Learig, made into Mrs. Whitteraick, by the blessing of Dr. Blether, rode away into Edinburgh in a post-chaise, with a brown and a black horse, one blind, and the other lame, seated cheek-by-jowl with her loving spouse, who, doubtless, was busked out in his best, with a Manchester superfine blue coat, and double gilt buttons, a waterproof hat, silk stockings, with open-steek gushats, and bright yellow shamoy gloves.

A stranger among strangers, and no kenning how she might thole the company and conversation of town-life, Mrs. Whitteraick, that was to be, hired a bit wench of a lassie from the neighbourhood, that was to follow her, come the term. And who think ye should this lassie be, but Nanse Cromie,—afterwards, in the course of a kind providence, the honoured wife of my bosom, and the mother of bonny Benjie.

In going up and down the stairs—it being a common entry, ye observe—me maybe going down with my everyday hat on to my dinner, and she coming

up, carrying a stoup of water, or half a-pound of pouthered butter on a plate, with a piece paper thrown over it,—we frequently met half-way, and had to stand still to let one another pass. Nothing came out of these foregatherings, howsomever, for a month or two, she being as shy and modest as she was bonny, with her clean demity short-gown, and snow-white morning mutch, to say nothing of her cherry mou, and her glancing een; and me unco douffie in making up to strangers. We could not help, nevertheless, to take aye a stoun look of each other in passing; and I was a gone man, bewitched out of my seven senses, falling from my claes, losing my stomach, and over the lugs in love, three weeks and some odd days before ever a single syllable passed between us.

Gude kens how long this Quaker-meeting-like silence would have continued, had we not chanced to foregather one gloaming; and I, having gotten a dram from one of our customers with a hump-back, at the Crosscausey, whose fashionable new coat I had been out fitting on, found myself as brave as a Bengal tiger, and said to her, "This is a fine day, I say, my dear Nancy."

The ice being once broken, every thing went on as smoothly as ye like; so, in the long run, we went like lightning from twa-handed cracks on the stair-head, to stown walks, after work-hours, out by the West Port, and thereaway.

If ever a man loved, and loved like mad, it was me, Mansie Wauch,—and I take no shame in the confession; but, kenning it all in the course of nature, declare it openly and courageously in the face of the wide world. Let them laugh who like; honest folk, I pity them; such know not the pleasures of virtuous affection. It is not in corrupted, sinful hearts that the fire of true love can ever burn clear. Alas, and ohon orie! they lose the sweetest, completest, dearest, truest pleasure that this world has in store for its children. They know not the bliss to meet, that makes the embrace of separation bitter. They never dreamed the dreams that make wakening to the morning light unpleasant. They never felt the raptures that can dirl like darts through a man's soul from a woman's ee. They never tasted the honey that dwells on a woman's lip, sweeter than yellow marygolds to the bee; or fretted under the fever of bliss that glows through the frame in pressing the hand of a suddenly met, and fluttering sweetheart. But tuts-tuts—hech-how! my day has long since past; and this is stuff to drop from the lips of an auld fool. Nevertheless, forgive me, friends: I cannot help all-powerful nature.

Nanse's taste being like my own, we amused one another in abusing great cities, which are all choke-full of the abominations of the Scarlet Woman; and it is curious how soon I learned to be up to trap—I

mean in an honest way; for, when she said she was wearying the very heart out of her to be home again to Lauder, which she said was her native, and the true land of Goshen, I spoke back to her by way of answer—"Nancy, my dear, believe me that the real land of Goshen is out at Dalkeith; and if ye'll take up house wi' me, and enter into a way of doing, I daursay in a while ye'll come to think so too."

What will ye say there? Matters were by-and-bye settled full tosh between us; and, though the means of both parties were small, we were young, and able and willing to help one another. Nanse, out of her wages, had hained a trifle; and I had, safe lodged under lock-and-key in the bank of Scotland, against the time of my setting up, the siller which was got by selling the bit house of granfaither's, on the death of my ever-to-be-lamented mother, who survived her helpmate only six months, leaving me an orphan lad in a wicked world, obliged to fend, forage, and look out for myself.

Taking matters into account, therefore, and considering that it is not good for man to be alone, Nanse and me laid our heads together towards the taking a bit house in the fore-street of Dalkeith; and at our leisure kept a look-out about buying the plenishing—the expense of which, for different littles and littles, amounted to more than we expected; yet, to our hearts content, we made some most famous second-hand bargains of sprechery, amongst

the old-furniture warehousemen of the Cowgate. I might put down here the prices of the room-grate, the batchelor's oven, the cheese-toaster, and the warming-pan especially, which, though it had a wheen holes in it, kept a fine polish; but, somehow or other, have lost the receipt, and cannot make true affidavy.

Certain it is, whatever cadgers may say to the contrary, that the back is aye made for the burden; and, were all to use the means, and be industrious, many, that wyte bad harvests, and worse times, would have, like the miller in the auld sang, "A penny in the purse for dinner and for supper," or better to finish the verse, "Gin ye please a guid fat cheese, and lumps o' yellow butter."

For two three days, I must confess, after Maister Wiggie had gone through the ceremony of tying us together, and Nanse and me found ourselves in the comfortable situation of man and wife, I was a wee dowie and desponding, thinking that we were to have a numerous small family, and where trade was to come from; but no sooner was my sign nailed up, with four iron haudfasts, by Johnny Hammer, painted in black letters on a blue ground, with a picture of a jacket on one side, and a pair of shears on the other,—and my shop-door opened to the public, with a wheen ready-made waistcoats, gallowses, leather-caps, and Kilmarnock cowls, hung up at the window, than business flowed in upon us in a perfect

torrent. First one came in for his measure, and then another. A wife came in for a pair of red worsted boots for her bairn, but would not take them for they had not blue fringes. A bare-headed lassie, hoping to be handsel, threw down twopence, and asked tape at three yards for a halfpenny. The minister sent an old black coat beneath his maid's arm, prinned up in a towel, to get docked in the tails down into a jacket; which I trust I did to his entire satisfaction, making it fit to a hair. The Duke's butler himself patronized me, by sending me a coat which was all hair powder and pomate, to get a new neck put to it. And James Batter, aye a staunch friend of the family, despatched a barefoot cripple lassie down the close to me, with a brown paper parcel, tied with skinie, and having a memorandum letter sewed on the top of it, and wafered with a wafer. It ran as follows: "Maister Batter has sent down, per the bearer, with his compliments to Maister Wauch, a cuttikin of corduroy, deficient in the instap, which please let out, as required. Maister Wauch will also please be so good as observe, that three of the buttons have sprung the thorls, which he will be obliged to him to replace, at his earliest convenience. Please send me a message what that may be; and have the account made out, article for article, and duly discharged, that I may send down the bearer with the change; and to bring me back the cuttikin and the account,

to save time and trouble. I am, dear sir, your most obedient friend, and ever most sincerely,

"JAMES BATTER."

No wonder than we attracted customers, for our sign was the prettiest ye ever saw, though the jacket was not just so neatly painted, as for some sand-blind creatures not to take it for a goose. I daresay there were fifty half-naked bairns glowring their een out of their heads at it, from morning till night; and, after they all were gone to their beds, both Nanse and me found ourselves so proud of our new situation in life, that we slipped out in the dark by ourselves, and had a prime look at it with a lantern.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FOREWARNING.

I had a dream which was not all a dream.

BYRON.

Coming events cast their shadows before.

CAMPBELL.

ON first commencing business, I have freely confessed, I believe, that I was unco solicitous of custom, though less from sinful, selfish motives, than from the, I trust, laudable fear I had about becoming in a jiffy the father of a small family, every one with a mouth to fill and a back to cleid—helpless bairns, with nothing to look to or lean on, save and except the proceeds of my daily handiwork. Nothing, however, is sure in this world, as Maister Wiggie more than once took occasion to observe, when lecturing on the house built by the foolish man on the sea-sands; for months passed on, and better passed on; and these, added together by simple addition, amounted to three years; and still neither word nor

wittens of a family, to perpetuate our name to future generations, appeared to be forthcoming.

Between friends, I make no secret of the matter, that this was a catastrophe which vexed me not a little, for more reasons than one. In the first place, youngsters being a bond of mutual affection between man and wife, sweeter than honey from the comb, and stronger than the Roman cement, with which the old Picts built their briggs, that will last till the day of doom. In the second place, bairns toddling round a bit ingle, make a house look like itself, especially in the winter time, when hail-stanes rattle on the window, and winds roar like the voices of mighty giants at the lum-head; for then the maister of the dwelling finds himself like an ancient patriarch, and the shepherd of a flock, tender as young lambs, yet pleasant to his eye, and dear to his heart. And in the third place, (for I'll speak the truth, and shame the De'il,) as I could not thole the gibes and idle tongues of a wheen fools, that, for their diversion, would be asking me, "How the wife and bairns were; and if I had sent my auldest laddie to the school yet?"

I have swithered within myself for more than half-an-hour, whether I should relate a circumstance bordering a wee on the supernatural line, that happened to me, as connected with the business of the bairns of which I have been just speaking; and, were it for no other reason, but just to plague the scoffer that sits in

his elbow-chair, I have determined to jot down the whole miraculous paraphernally in black and white. With folk that will not listen to the voice of reason, it is needless to be wasterful of words; so them that like, may either prin their faith to my coat-sleeve, about what I am going to relate, or not—just as they choose. All that I can say in my defence, and as an affidavy to my veracity, is, that I have been thirty year an elder of Maister Wiggie's kirk—and that is no joke. The matter I make free to consider is not a laughing concern, nor any thing belonging to the Merry-Andrew line; and, if folk were but strong in the faith, there is no saying what may come to pass for their good. One might as well hold up their brazen face, and pretend not to believe ony thing—neither the Witch of Endor raising up Samuel; nor Cornel Gardener's vision; nor Johnny Wilkes and the De'il; nor Peden's prophecies.

Nanse and me aye made what they call an anniversary of our wedding-day, which happened to be the fifth of November, the very same as that on which the Gunpowder Plot chances to be occasionally held,—Sunday's excepted. According to custom, this being the third year, we collected a good few friends to a tea-drinking; and had our cracks and a glass or two of toddy. Thomas Burlings, if I mind, was there, and his wife; and Deacon Paunch, he was a bachelor; and likewise James Batter; and David Sawdust and his wife, and their four bairns,

guid customers; and a wheen more, that, without telling a lie, I could not venture to particularize at this moment, though maybe I may mind them when I'm no wanting,—but nae matter.—Well, as I was saying, after they a' gaed away, and Nanse and me, after locking the door, slipped to our bed, I had one of the most miraculous dreams recorded in the history of man; more especially if we take into consideration where, when, and to whom it happened.

At first I thought I was sitting by the fireside, where the cat and the kittling were playing with a mouse they had catched in the meal-kit, cracking with James Batter on check-reels for yarn, and the cleverest way of winding pirns, when, all at once, I thought myself transplanted back to the auld world,—forgetting the tailoring trade, broad and narrow cloth, worsted boots and Kilmarnock cowls, pleasant Dalkeith, our late yearly ploys, my kith and kindred, the friends of the people, the Duke's parks, and so on,—and found myself walking beneath beautiful trees, from the branches of which hung apples, and oranges, and cocky-nuts, and walnuts, and raisins, and plumdameses, and corrydanders, and more than the tongue of man can tell, while all the birds and beasts seemed as tame as our bantings; in fact, just as they were in the days of Adam and Eve,—tigers passing by on this hand, and Russian bears on that, rowing themselves on the grass, out of fun; while peacocks, and magpies, and parrots, and cocky-

toos, and yorlins, and grey-linties, and all birds of sweet voice and fair feather, sported among the woods, as if they had nothing to do but sit and sing in the sweet sunshine, having dread neither of the net of the fowler, the double-barrelled gun of the gamekeeper, nor the laddie's girn set with moolings of bread. It was real paradise; and I found myself fairly lifted off my feet and transported out of my seven senses.

While sauntering about at my leisure, with my Sunday hat on, and a pair of clean white cotton stockings, in this heavenly mood, under the green trees, and beside the still waters, out of which beautiful salmon-trouts were sporting and leaping, methought in a moment I fell down in a trance, as flat as a flounder, and I heard a voice visibly saying to me, "Thou shalt have a son: let him be Christened Benjamin!" The joy that this vision brought my spirit thrilled through my bones, like the sounds of a blind man grinding "Rule Britannia" out of an organ, and my senses vanished from me into a kind of slumber, on rousing from which I thought I found myself walking, all dressed, with powdered hair, and a long tye behind, just like a grand gentleman, with a valuable bamboo walking-stick in my hand, among green yerbs and flowers, like an auncient hermit far away among the hills, at the back of beyont; as if broadcloth and buckram had never been heard tell of, and serge, twist, pocket-linings,

and shamby leather, were matters with which mortal man had no concern.

Speak of auld-light or new-light as ye like, for my own part I am not much taken up with any of your warlock and wizard trade: I have no brew of your auld Major Weir, or Tam o' Shanter, or Michael Scott, or Thamas the Rhymer's kind, knocking in pins behind doors to make decent folk dance, jig, cut, and shuffle themselves to death,—splitting the hills as ye would spelder a haddy, and playing all manner of evil pranks, and sinful abominations, till their crafty maister, Auld Nick, puts them to their mettle, by setting them to twine ropes out of sea-sand, and sic like. I like none of your paternosters, and saying of prayers backwards, or drawing lines with coulk round ye, before crying,

> "Redcowl, redcowl, come if ye daur;
> Lift the sneck, and draw the bar."

I never, in the whole course of my life, was fond of lending the sanction of my countenance to any thing that was not canny; and, even when I was a wee smout of a callant, with my jacket and trowsers buttoned all in one, I never would play, on Hallo'-e'en night, at any thing else but douking for apples, burning nuts, pulling kail-runts, foul water and clean, drapping the egg, or trying who was to be your sweetheart out of the lucky-bag.

As I have often thought, and sometimes taken

occasion to observe, it would be well for us all to profit by experience,—"burned bairns should dread the fire," as the proverb goes. After the miserable catastrophe of the playhouse, for instance—which I shall afterwards have occasion to commemorate in due time, and in a subsequent chapter of my eventful life—I would have been worse than mad, had I persisted, night after night, to pay my shilling for a veesy of vagrants in buckram, and limmers in silk, parading away at no allowance—as kings and queens, with their tale—speaking havers that only fools have throats wide enough to swallow, and giving themselves airs to which they have no more earthly title than the man in the moon; I say nothing, besides, of their throwing glamour in honest folks een; but I'll no deny that I have been told by them who would not lee, and were living witnesses of the transaction, that, as true as death, they had seen the tane of these ne'erdoweels spit the other, through and through, with a weel-sharpened, auld, hieland, forty-second Andrew Ferrary, in single combat; whereupon, as might reasonably be expected, he would, in the twinkling of a farthing rushlight, fall down as dead as a bag of sand; yet, by their rictum-ticktum, rise-up-Jack, slight of hand, hocus-pocus way, would be on his legs, brushing the stour from his breek knees, before the green curtain was half-way down. James Batter himself once told me, that, when he was a laddie, he saw one of these

clanjamphrey go in behind the scenes with nankeen trowsers, a blue coat out at the elbows, and fair hair hinging over his ears, and in less than no time come out a real negro, as black as Robison Crusoe's man Friday, with a jacket on his back of Macgregor tartan, and as good a pair of buckskin breeches as jockey ever mounted horse in at a Newmarket race. Where the silk stockings were wrought, and the Jerusalem sandals made, that he had on his feet, James Batter used doucely to observe he would leave every reasonable man to guess at a venture.

A good story not being the worse of being twice told, I repeat it over again, that I would have been worse than daft, after the precious warning it was my fortune to get, to have sanctioned such places with my presence, in spite of the remonstrances of my conscience—and of Maister Wiggie—and of the kirk-session. Wherever any thing is carried on out of the course of nature, especially when accompanied with dancing and singing, toot-tooing of clarionets, and bumming of bass-fiddles, ye may be as sure as you are born, that ye run a chance of being deluded out of your right senses—that the sounds are by way of lulling the soul asleep—and that, to the certainty of a-without-a-doubt, you are in the heat and heart of one of the devil's rendevooses.

To say no more, I was once myself, for example, at one of our Dalkeith fairs, present in a hay-loft—

I think they charged threepence at the door, but let me in with a grudge for twopence, but no matter—to see a punch and puppie-show business, and other slight-of-hand work. Well, the very moment I put my neb within the door, I was visibly convinced of the smell of burnt roset, with which I understand they make lightning, and kent, as well as maybe, what they had been traffecking about with their black-art; but, nevertheless, having a stout heart, I determined to sit still, and see what they would make of it, kenning well enough, that, as long as I had the Psalm-book in my pouch, they would be gay and clever to throw any of their blasted cantrips over me.

What div ye think they did? One of them, a waff, drucken-looking scoundrel, fired a gold ring over the window, and mostly set fire to the thack house opposite—which was not insured. Yet where think ye did the ring go to? With my living een I saw it taen out of auld Willie Turneep's waistcoat pouch, who was sitting blind fou, with his mouth open, on one of the back seats; so, by no earthly possibility could it have got there, except by whizzing round the gavel, and in through the steeked door by the key-hole.

Folk may say what they chuse by way of apology, but I neither like nor understand such on-going as changing sterling silver half-crowns into copper

penny-pieces, or mending a man's coat—as they did mine, after cutting a blad out of one of the tails—by the black-art.

But, hout-tout, one thing and another coming across me, had almost clean made me forget explaining to the world the upshot of my extraordinary vision; but better late than never,—and now for it.

Nanse, on finding herself in a certain way, was a thought dumfoundered; and instead of laughing, as she did at first, when I told her my dream, she soon came to regard the matter as one of sober earnest. The very prospect of what was to happen threw a gleam of comfort round our bit fireside; and, long ere the day had come about which was to crown our expectations, Nanse was prepared with her bit stock of baby's wearing apparel, and all necessaries appertaining thereto—wee little mutches with lace borders, and side knots of blue three-ha'penny ribbon—long muslin frockies, vandyked across the breast, drawn round the waist with narrow nittings, and tucked five rows about the tail—Welsh-flannel petticoaties—demity wrappers—a coral gumstick, and other uncos, which it does not befit the like of me to particularize. I trust, on my part, as far as in me lay, I was not found wanting; having taken care to provide a famous Dunlop cheese, at fivepence ha'penny the pound—I blief I paled fifteen, in Joseph Gowdy's shop, before I fixed on it;—to say nothing of a bottle, or maybe two, of real

peet-reek, Farintosh, small-still Hieland whisky—Glenlivat I think is the name o't—half a peck of shortbread, baken by Thomas Burlings, with three pounds of butter, and two ounces of carvie-seeds in it, let alone orange-peel, and a penny-worth of ground cinnamon—half a mutchkin of best cony brandy, by way of change—and a Musselburgh ankerstoke, to slice down for tea-drinkings and posset cups.

Every one has reason to be thankful, and me among the rest; for many a worse provided for, and less welcome down-lying has taken place, time out of mind, throughout broad Scotland. I say this with a warm heart, as I am grateful for all my mercies. To hundreds above hundreds such a catastrophe brings scarcely any joy at all; but it was far different with me, who had a Benjamin to look for.

If the reader will be so kind as look over the next chapter, he will find whether or not I was disappointed in my expectations.

CHAPTER VIII.

LETTING LODGINGS.

Then first he ate the white puddings,
And syn he ate the black, O;
Though muckle thought the Gudewife to hersell,
Yet ne'er a word she spak, O.
But up then started our Gudeman,
And an angry man was he, O.

Old Song.

It would be curious if I passed over a remarkable incident, which at this time fell out.—Being but new beginners in the world, the wife and I put our heads constantly together to contrive for our forward advancement, as it is the bounden duty of all to do. So our housie being rather large, (two rooms and a kitchen, not speaking of a coal-cellar, and a hen-house,) and having as yet only the expectation of a family, we thought we could not do better than get John Varnish the painter, to do off a small ticket, with "A Furnished Room to Let" on it, which we nailed out at the window; having collect-

ed into it the choicest of our furniture, that it might fit a genteeler lodger and produce a better rent— And a lodger soon we got.

Dog on it! I think I see him yet. He was a blackavised Englishman, with curled whiskers and a powdered pow, stout round the waist-band, and fond of good eating, let alone drinking, as we found to our cost. Well, he was our first lodger. We sought a good price, that we might, on bargaining, have the merit of coming down a tait; but no, no— go away wi' ye; it was dog-cheap to him. The half-guinea a week was judged perfectly moderate; but if all his debts were——yet I must not cut before the cloth.

Hang expenses! was the order of the day. Ham and eggs for breakfast, let alone our currant-jelly. Roast-mutton cold, and strong ale, at twelve, by way of chack, to keep away wind from the stomach. Smoking roast-beef, with scraped horse-raddish, at four preceesely; and toasted cheese, punch, and porter, for supper. It would have been less, had all the things been within ourselves. Nothing had we but the cauler new-laid eggs; then, there was Deacon Heukbane's butch r's account; and John Cony's spirit account; and William Burling's bap account; and deevil kens how many more accounts, that came all in upon us afterwards. But the crowning of all came in at the end. It was no farce at the time, and kept our heads down at the water

edge for many a day. I was just driving the hot guse along the seams of a Sunday jacket I was finishing for Thomas Clod the ploughman, when the Englisher came in at the shop door, whistling "Robin Adair," and "Scots wha ha'e wi' Wallace bled," and whiles, maybe, churming to himself like a young blackbird ;—but I have not patience to go through wi't. The long and the short of the matter, however, was, that, after rummaging among my two or three webs of broad-cloth on the shelf, he pitched on a Manchester blue, five quarters wide, marked CXD.XF, which is to say, three-and-twenty shillings the yard. I told him it was impossible to make a pair of pantaloons to him in two hours; but he insisted upon having them, alive or dead, as he had to go down the same afternoon to dine with my Lord Duke, no less. I convinced him, that if I was to sit up all night, he could get them by five next morning, if that would do, as I would also keep my laddie, Tammy Bodkin, out of his bed; but no—I thought he would have loupen out of his seven senses. "Just look," he said, turning up the inside seam of the leg—"just see—can any gentleman make a visit in such things as these? they are as full of holes as a coal-sieve. I wonder the devil why my baggage has not come forward. Can I get a horse and boy to ride express to Edinburgh for a ready-made article?"

A thought struck me; for I had heard of wonder-

ful advancement in the world, for those who had been so lucky as help the great at a pinch. "If ye'll no take it amiss, sir," said I, making my obedience, "a notion has just struck me."

"Well, what is it?" said he, briskly.

"Well, sir, I have a pair of knee-breeches, of most famous velveteen, double tweel, which have been only once on my legs, and that no farther gone than last Sabbath. I'm pretty sure they would fit ye in the meantime; and I would just take a pleasure in ca'ing the needle all night, to get your own ready."

"A clever thought," said the Englisher. "Do you think they would fit me?—Devilish clever thought indeed."

"To a hair," I answered; and cried to Nanse to bring the velveteens.

I do not think he was ten minutes, when lo, and behold! out at the door he went, and away past the shop-window like a lamp-lighter. The buttons on the velveteens were glittering like gold at the knees. Alas! it was like the flash of the setting-sun; I never beheld them more. He was to have been back in two or three hours, but the laddie, with the box on his shoulder, was going through the street crying "Hot penny-pies" for supper, and neither word nor wittens of him. I began to be a thought uneasy, and fidgetted on the board like a hen on a het girdle. No man should do anything when he

is vexed, but I could not help giving Tammy Bodkin, who was sewing away at the lining of the new pantaloons, a terrible whisk in the lug, for singing to himself. I say I was vexed for it afterwards; especially as the laddie did not mean to give offence; and as I saw the blae marks of my four fingers along his chaft-blade.

The wife had been bothering me for a new gown, on strength of the payment of our grand bill; and in came she, at this blessed moment of time, with about twenty swatches from Simeon Calicoe's, prinned on a screed of paper.

"Which of thae do you think bonniest?" said Nanse, in a flattering way; "I ken, Mansie, you have a good taste."

"Cut not before the cloth," answered I, "gudewife," with a wise shake of my head. "It'll be time enough, I daresay, to make your choice to-morrow."

Nanse went out, as if her nose had been blooding. I could thole it no longer; so, buttoning my breek-knees, I threw my cowl into a corner, clapped my hat on my head, and away down in full birr to the Duke's gate.

I speired at the porter, if the gentleman with the velveteen breeches and powdered hair, that was dining with the Duke, had come up the avenue yet?

"Velveteen breeches and powdered hair!" said

auld Paul, laughing, and taking the pipe out of his cheek. "Whose butler is't that ye're after?"

"Weel," said I to him, "I see it all as plain as a pikestaff. He is off bodily; but may the meat and the drink he has taken off us, be like drogs to his inside; and may the velveteens play crack, and cast the steeks at every stap he takes!" It was no Christian wish; and Paul leugh till he was like to burst, at my expense. "Gang ye're ways hame, Mansie," said he to me, clapping me on the shoulder, as if I had been a wean, "and give over setting traps, for ye see you have catched a Tartar."

This was too much; first to be cheated by a swindling loon, and then made game of by a flunky; and, in my desperation, I determined to do some awful thing.

Nanse followed me in from the door, and speired what news?—I was ower big, and ower vexed to hear her; so, never letting on, I went to the little looking-glass on the drawer's head, and set it down on the table. Then I looked myself in it for a moment, and made a gruesome face. Syne I pulled out the little drawer, and got the sharping strap, the which I fastened to my button. Syne I took my razor from the box, and gave it five or six turns, along first one side and then the other, with great precision. Syne I tried the edge of it along the flat of my hand. Syne I loosed my neck-cloth, and laid it ower the back of the chair; and syne I took out

the button of my shirt-neck, and folded it back. Nanse, who was, all the time, standing behind, looking what I was after, asked me, "if I was gaen to shave without het water?" when I said to her in a fierce and brave manner, (which was very cruel considering the way she was in,) "I'll let you see that presently." The razor looked desperate sharp; and I never liked the sight of blood; but oh, I was in a terrible flurry and fermentation. A kind of cold trembling went through me; and I thought it best to tell Nanse what I was going to do, that she might be something prepared for it. "Fare ye well, my dear!" said I to her, "you will be a widow in five minutes—for here goes!". I did not think she could have mustered so much courage, but she sprang at me like a tiger; and, throwing the razor into the ass-hole, took me round the neck, and cried like a bairn. First she was seized with a fit of the hystericks, and then with her pains. It was a serious time for us both, and no joke; for my heart smote me for my sin and cruelty. But I did my best to make up for it. I ran up and down like mad, for the Howdie, and at last brought her trotting along with me by the lug. I could not stand it. I shut myself up in the shop, with Tammy Bodkin, like Daniel in the lions' den; and every now and then opened the door to speir what news. Oh, but my heart was like to break with anxiety. I paced up and down, and to and fro, with my Kil-

marnock on my head, and my hands in my breek-pouches, like a man out of Bedlam. I thought it would never be over; but, at the second hour of the morning, I heard a wee squeel, and knew that I was a father; and so proud was I, that, notwithstanding our loss, Lucky Bringtherout and me whanged away at the cheese and bread, and drank so briskly at the whisky and foot-yill, that, when she tried to rise and go away, she could not stir a foot; so Tammy and I had to oxter her out between us, and deliver her safe in at her own door.

CHAPTER IX.

BENJIE'S CHRISTENING.

We'll hap and row, hap and row,
  We'll hap and row the feetie o't;
It is a wee bit weary thing,
  I dinna bide the greetie o't.

PROVOST CREECH.

An honest man, close buttoned to the chin,
Broad-cloth without, and a warm heart within.

COWPER.

This great globe and all that it inherits shall dissolve,
And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leave not a wreck behind.

SHAKSPEARE.

At the kirstening of our only bairn, Benjie, two or three remarkable circumstances occurred, which it behoves me to relate.

It was on a cold November afternoon; and really when the bit room was all redd up, the fire bleezing away, and the candles lighted, everything looked fu' tosh and comfortable. It was a real pleasure,

after looking out into the drift that was fleeing like mad from the east, to turn one's neb inwards, and think that we had a civilized home to comfort us in the dreary season. So, one after another, the bit party we had invited to the ceremony, came papping in; and the crack began to get loud and hearty; for, to speak the truth, we were blessed with canny friends, and a good neighbourhood. Notwithstanding, it was very curious, that I had no mind of asking down James Batter, the weaver, honest man, though he was one of our own elders; and in papped James, just when the company had hafflins met; with his stocking-sleeves on his arms, his night-cap on his head, and his blue-stained apron hanging down before him, to light his pipe at our fire.

James, when he saw his mistake, was fain to make his retreat; but we would not hear tell of it, till he came in, and took a dram out of the bottle, as we told him the no doing so would spoil the wean's beauty, which is an old freak, (the smallpox, however, afterwards did that;) so, with much persuasion, he took a chair for a gliff, and began with some of his drolls—for he is a clever, humoursome man, as ye ever met with. But he had now got far on with his jests, when lo! a rap came to the door, and Mysie whipped away the bottle under her apron, saying, "Wheesht, wheesht, for the sake of gudeness, there's the minister."

The room had only one door, and Jamie mistook

it, running his head, for lack of knowledge, into the open closet, just as the minister lifted the outer-door sneck. We were all now sitting on nettles, for we were frighted that James would be seized with a cough, for he was a wee asthmatic; or that some, knowing there was a thief in the pantry, might hurt good manners by breaking out into a giggle. However, all for a considerable time was quiet, and the ceremony was performed; little Nancy, our niece, handing the bairn upon my arm to receive its name. So, we thought, as the minister seldom made a long stay on similar occasions, that all would pass off well enough. But wait a wee.

There was but one of our company that had not cast up, to wit, Deacon Paunch, the flesher, a most worthy man, but tremendously big, and grown to the very heels, as was once seen on a wager, that his ankle was greater than my brans. It was really a pain to all feeling Christians, to see the worthy man waigling about, being, when weighed in his own scales, two-and-twenty stone ten ounces, Dutch weight. Honest man, he had had a sore fecht with the wind and the sleet, and he came in with a shawl roppined round his neck, peching like a broken-winded horse; so fain was he to find a rest for his weary carcass in our stuffed chintz pattern elbow-chair by the fire cheek.

From the soughing of wind at the window, and the rattling in the lum, it was clear to all manner

of comprehension, that the night was a dismal one; so the minister, seeing so many of his own douce folk about him, thought he might do worse than volunteer to sit still, and try our toddy; indeed we would have pressed him before this to do so; but what was to come of James Batter, who was shut up in the closet, like the spies in the house of Rahab the harlot, in the city of Jericho?

James began to find it was a bad business; and having been driving the shuttle about from before daylight, he was fain to cruik his hough, and felt round about him quietly in the dark for a chair to sit down upon, since better might not be. But, wae's me! the cat was soon out of the pock.

Me and the minister were just argle-bargling some few words on the doctrine of the camel and the eye of the needle, when, in the midst of our discourse, as all was wheesht and attentive, an awful thud was heard in the closet, which gave the minister, who thought the house had fallen down, such a start, that his very wig louped for a full three-eighths off his crown. I say we were needcessitated to let the cat out of the pock for two reasons; firstly, because we did not know what had happened, and secondly, to quiet the minister's fears, decent man, for he was a wee nervous. So we made a hearty laugh of it, as well as we could, and opened the door to bid James Batter come out, as we confessed all. Easier said than done, howsoever.

When we pulled open the door, and took forward one of the candles, there was James doubled up, sticking twofold like a rotten in a sneck-trap, in an auld chair, the bottom of which had gone down before him, and which, for some craize about it, had been put out of the way by Nanse, that no accident might happen. Save us! if the deacon had sate down upon it, pity on our brick-floor.

Well, after some ado, we got James, who was more frighted than hurt, hauled out of his hidy-hole; and after taking off his cowl, and sleeking down his front hair, he took a seat beside us, apologeezing for not being in his Sunday's garb, the which the minister, who was a free and easy man, declared there was no occasion for, and begged him to make himself comfortable.

Well, passing over that business, Mr. Wiggie and me entered into our humours, for the drappikie was beginning to tell on my noddle, and made me a little venturesome—not to say that I was not a little proud to have the minister in my bit housie; so, says I to him in a cosh way, "Ye may believe me or no, Mr. Wiggie, but mair than me think ye out of sight the best preacher in the parish—nane of them, Mr. Wiggie, can hold the candle to ye, man."

Weesht, weesht," said the body, in rather a cold way that I did not expect, kenning him to be as proud as a peacock—"I daresay I am just like my neighbours."

This was not just so kind,—so says I to him, "Maybe sae, for many a one thinks ye could not hold a candle to Mr. Blowster the Cameronian, that whiles preaches at Lugton."

This was a stramp on his corny toe. "Na, na," answered Mr. Wiggie, rather nettled; "let us drop that subject. I preach like my neighbours. Some of them may be worse, and others better; just as some of your own trade may make clothes worse, and some better, than yourself."

My corruption was raised. "I deny that," said I, in a brisk manner, which I was sorry for after— "I deny that, Mr. Wiggie," says I to him; "I'll make a pair of breeches with the face of clay."

But this was only a passing breeze, during the which, howsoever, I happened to swallow my thimble, which accidentally slipped off my middle finger, causing both me and the company general alarm, as there were great fears that it might mortify in the stomach; but it did not; and neither word nor wittens of it have been seen or heard tell of from that to this day. So, in two three minutes, we had some few good songs, and a round of Scotch proverbs, when the clock chapped eleven. We were all getting, I must confess, a thought noisy; Johnny Souter having broken a dram-glass, and Willie Fegs couped a bottle on the bit table-cloth; all noisy, I say, except Deacon Paunch, douce man, who had fallen into a pleasant slumber; so, when the minis-

ter arose to take his hat, they all rose except the Deacon, whom we shook by the arms for some time, but in vain, to waken him. His round, oily face, good creature, was just as if it had been cut out of a big turnip, it was so fat, fozy, and soft; but at last, after some ado, we succeeded, and he looked about him with a wild stare, opening his two red een, like Pandore oysters, asking what had happened; and we got him hoized up on his legs, tying the blue shawl round his bull-neck again.

Our company had not got well out of the door, and I was priding myself in my heart, about being landlord to such a goodly turn out, when Nanse took me by the arm, and said, "Come, and see such an unearthly sight." This startled me, and I hesitated; but, at long and last, I went in with her, a thought alarmed at what had happened, and—my gracious!! there, on the easy-chair, was our bonny tortoise-shell cat, Tommy, with the red morocco collar about its neck, bruised as flat as a flounder, and as dead as a mawk!!!

The Deacon had sat down upon it without thinking; and the poor animal, that our neighbours' bairns used to play with, and be so fond of, was crushed out of life without a cheep. The thing, doubtless, was not intended, but it gave Nanse and me a very sore heart.

CHAPTER X.

THE RESURRECTION MEN

How then was the Devil drest?
He was in his Sunday's best,
His coat was red, and his breeches were blue,
With a hole behind where his tail came thro
Over the hill, and over the dale,
  And he went over the plain,
And backward and forward he switch'd his tail
  As a gentleman switches his cane.

SOUTHEY ET COLERIDGE.

ABOUT this time there arose a great sough and surmise, that some loons were playing false with the kirkyard, howking up the bodies from their damp graves, and harling them away to the College. Words cannot describe the fear, and the dool, and the misery it caused. All flocked to the kirk-yett; and the friends of the newly buried stood by the mools, which were yet dark, and the brown newly-cast divots, that had not yet taken root, looking, with mournful faces, to descry any tokens of sinking in.

I'll never forget it. I was standing by when three young lads took shools, and, lifting up the truff, proceeded to houk down to the coffin, wherein they had laid the grey hairs of their mother. They looked wild and bewildered like, and the glance of their een was like that of folk out of a mad-house; and none dared in the world to have spoken to them. They did not even speak to one another; but wrought on with a great hurry, till the spades struck on the coffin lid—which was broken. The dead-claiths were there huddled together in a nook, but the dead was gone. I took hold of Willie Walker's arm, and looked down. There was a cold sweat all over me;—losh me! but I was terribly frighted and eerie. Three more were opened, and all just alike; save and except that of a wee unkirstened wean, which was aff bodily, coffin and all.

There was a burst of righteous indignation throughout the parish; nor without reason. Tell me that doctors and graduates must have the dead; but tell it not to Mansie Wauch, that our hearts must be trampled in the mire of scorn, and our best feelings laughed at, in order that a bruise may be properly plaistered up, or a sore head cured. Verily, the remedy is worse than the disease.

But what remead? It was to watch in the session-house, with loaded guns, night about, three at a time. I never liked to go into the kirkyard after darkening, let-a-be to sit there through a long win-

ter night, windy and rainy it may be, with none but the dead around us. Save us! it was an unco thought, and garred all my flesh creep; but the cause was gude—my corruption was raised—and I was determined not to be daunted.

I counted and counted, but the dread day at length came, and I was summoned. All the live-long afternoon, when ca'ing the needle upon the board, I tried to whistle Jenny Nettles, Niel Gow, and other funny tunes, and whiles crooned to my-self between hands; but my consternation was visible, and all would not do.

It was in November; and the cold glimmering sun sank behind the Pentlands. The trees had been shorn of their frail leaves; and the misty night was closing fast in upon the dull and short day; but the candles glittered at the shop windows, and leery-light-the-lamps was brushing about with his ladder in his oxter, and bleezing flamboy sparking out be-hind him. I felt a kind of qualm of faintness and down-sinking about my heart and stomach, to the dispelling of which I took a thimbleful of spirits, and, tying my red comforter about my neck, I march-ed briskly to the session-house. A neighbour, (Andrew Goldie, the pensioner,) lent me his piece, and loaded it to me. He took tent that it was only half-cock, and I wrapped a napkin round the dog-head, for it was raining. No being well acquaint with guns, I kept the muzzle aye away from me;

as it is every man's duty not to throw his precious life into jeopardy.

A furm was set before the session-house fire, which bleezed brightly, nor had I any thought that such an unearthly place could have been made to look half so comfortable either by coal or candle; so my spirits rose up as if a weight had been taken off them, and I wondered, in my bravery, that a man like me could be afraid of anything. Nobody was there but a touzy, ragged, halflins callant of thirteen, (for I speired his age,) with a desperate dirty face, and long carroty hair, tearing a speldrin with his teeth, which looked long and sharp enough, and throwing the skin and lugs into the fire.

We sat for mostly an hour together, cracking the best way we could in sic a place; nor was anybody more likely to cast up. The night was now pit-mirk; the wind soughed amid the head-stones and railings of the gentry, (for we maun a' dee,) and the black corbies in the steeple-holes cackled and crawed in a fearsome manner. All at once we heard a lonesome sound; and my heart began to play pit-pat—my skin grew all rough, like a pouked chicken —and I felt as if I did not know what was the matter with me. It was only a false alarm, however, being the warning of the clock; and, in a minute or two thereafter, the bell struck ten. Oh, but it was a lonesome and dreary sound! Every clap went

through my breast like the dunt of a fore-hammer.

Then up and spak the red-headed laddie:—"It's no fair; anither should hae come by this time. I wad rin awa hame, only I'm frighted to gang out my lane.—Do ye think the doup of that candle wad carry i' my cap?"

"Na, na, lad; we maun bide here, as we are here now.—Leave me alane? Lord safe us; and the yett lockit, and the bethrel sleeping wi' the key in his breek pouches!—We canna win out now though we would," answered I, trying to look brave, though half frightened out of my seven senses;—"Sit down, sit down; I've baith whisky and porter wi' me. Hae, man, there's a caulker to keep your heart warm; and set down that bottle," quoth I, wiping the saw-dust affn't with my hand, "to get a toast; I'se warrant it for Deacon Jaffrey's best brown stout."

The wind blew higher, and like a hurricane; the rain began to fall in perfect spouts; the auld kirk rumbled and rowed, and made a sad soughing; and the bourtrie behind the house, where auld Cockburn that cut his throat was buried, creaked and crazed in a frightful manner; but as to the roaring of the troubled waters, and the bumming in the lum-head, they were past all power of description. To make bad worse, just in the heart of the brattle, the grating sound of the yett turning on its rusty hinges

was but too plainly heard. What was to be done? I thought of our both running away; and then of our locking ourselves in, and firing through the door, but who was to pull the trigger?

Gudeness watch over us! I tremble yet when I think on't. We were perfectly between the de'il and the deep sea—either to stand still and fire our gun, or run and be shot at. It was really a hang choice. As I stood swithering and shaking, the laddie ran to the door, and, thrawing round the key, clapped his back to it. Oh! how I looked at him, as he stood for a gliff, like a magpie hearkening with his lug cocked up, or rather like a terrier watching a rotten. "They're coming, they're coming!" he cried out, "cock the piece, ye sumph;" while the red hair rose up from his pow like feathers; "they're coming, I hear them tramping on the gravel!" Out he stretched his arms against the wall, and brizzed his back against the door like mad; as if he had been Sampson pushing over the pillars in the house of Dagon. "For the Lord's sake, prime the gun," he cried out, "or our throats will be cut frae lug to lug before we can cry Jack Robison! See that there's priming in the pan."

I did the best I could; but my whole strength could hardly lift up the piece, which waggled to and fro like a cock's tail on a rainy day; my knees knocked against one another, and though I was resigned to die—I trust I was resigned to die—'od,

but it was a frightful thing to be out of one's bed, and to be murdered in a session-house, at the dead hour of night, by unearthly resurrection-men, or rather let me call them deevils incarnate, wrapt up in dreadnoughts, with blacked faces, pistols, big sticks, and other deadly weapons.

A snuff, snuffing was heard; and, through below the door, I saw a pair of glancing black e'en. 'Od, but my heart nearly louped off the bit—a snouff, and a gurr-gurring, and over all the plain tramp of a man's heavy tackets and cuddy heels among the gravel. Then came a great slap like thunder on the wall; and the laddie, quitting his grip, fell down, crying, "Fire, fire!—murder! holy murder!"

"Wha's there?" growled a deep rough voice; "open, I'm a freend."

I tried to speak, but could not; something like a ha'penny row was sticking in my throat, so I tried to cough it up, but it would not come. "Gie the pass-word then," said the laddie, staring as if his een would loup out; "gie the pass-word!"

First came a loud whistle, and then "Copmahagen," answered the voice. Oh! what a relief! The laddie started up, like one crazy with joy. "Ou! ou!" cried he, thrawing round the key, and rubbing his hands; "by jingo, it's the bethrel—it's the bethrel—it's auld Isaac himsell."

First rushed in the dog, and then Isaac, with his glazed hat, slouched over his brow, and his horn

boyet glimmering by his knee. "Has the French landed, do ye think? Losh keep us a'," said he, with a smile on his half-idiot face, (for he was a kind of a sort of a natural, with an infirmity in his leg,) "'Od snuff us, man, put by your gun. Ye dinna mean to shoot me, do ye? What are ye about here with the door lockit? I just keppit four resurrectioners louping ower the wall."

"Gude guide us," I said, taking a long breath to drive the blood from my heart, and something relieved by Isaac's company—"Come now, Isaac, ye're just gieing us a fright. Isn't that true, Isaac?"

"Yes, I'm joking—and what for no?—but they might have been, for onything ye wad hae hindered them to the contrair, I'm thinking. Na, na, ye maunna lock the door; that's no fair play."

When the door was put ajee, and the furm set forenent the fire, I gave Isaac a dram to keep his heart up on such a cauld stormy night. 'Od, but he was a droll fellow, Isaac! He sang and leuch as if he had been boozing in Luckie Thampson's, with some of his drucken cronies. Feint a hair cared he about auld kirks, or kirkyards, or vouts, or through-stanes, or dead folk in their winding-sheets, with the wet grass growing over them: and at last I began to brighten up a wee myself; so when he had gone over a good few funny stories, I said to him, quoth I, "Mony folk, I daresay, mak mair noise

about their sitting up in a kirkyard than its a' worth. There's naething here to harm us?"

"I beg to differ wi' ye there," answered Isaac, taking out his horn mull from his coat pouch, and tapping on the lid in a queer style—"I could gie anither version of that story. Did ye no ken of three young doctors—Eirish students—alang with some resurrectioners, as waff and wild as themsells, firing shottie for shottie with the guard at Kirkmabrecke, and lodging three slugs in ane of their backs, forbye firing a ramrod through anither ane's hat?"

This was a wee alarming—"No," quoth I; "no, Isaac, man; I never heard of it."

"But, let alane resurrectioners, do ye no think there is sic a thing as ghaists? Guide ye, man, my granny could hae telled as muckle about them as would have filled a minister's sermons from June to January."

"Kay—kay—that's all buff," I said. "Are there nae cutty-stool businesses—are there nae marriages gaun, Isaac?" for I was keen to change the subject.

"Ye may kay—kay, as ye like, though; I can just tell ye this:—Ye'll mind auld Armstrong with the leather breeks, and the brown three-story wig—him that was the grave-digger? Weel, he saw a ghaist wi' his leeving een—aye, and what's better, in this very kirkyard too. It was a cauld spring

morning, and daylight just coming in, whan he cam to the yett yonder, thinking to meet his man, paidling Jock—but he had sleepit in, and was na there. Weel, to the wast corner ower yonder he gaed, and throwing his coat ower a headstane, and his hat on the tap o't, he dug away with his spade, casting out the mools, and the coffin handles, and the green banes, and sic like, till he stoppit a wee to tak breath.—What! are ye whistling to yoursell?" quoth Isaac to me, "and no hearing what's God's truth?"

"Ou, aye," said I; "but ye didna tell me if onybody was cried last Sunday?"—I would have given every farthing I had made by the needle, to have been at that blessed time in my bed with my wife and wean. Ay, how I was gruing! I mostly chacked off my tongue in chittering.—But all would not do.

"Weel, speaking of ghaists—when he was resting on his spade he looked up to the steeple, to see what o'clock it was, wondering what way Jock hadna come, when lo! and behold, in the lang diced window of the kirk yonder, he saw a lady a' in white, with her hands clasped thegither, looking out to the kirk-yard at him.

"He couldna believe his een, so he rubbit them with his sark sleeve, but she was still there bodily; and, keeping ae ee on her, and anither on his road to the yett, he drew his coat and hat to him below his arm, and aff like mad, throwing the shool half-

a-mile ahint him. Jock fand that; for he was coming singing in at the yett, when his maister ran clean ower the tap o' him, and capsized him like a toom barrel; and never stoppit, till he was in at his ain house, and the door baith bolted and barred at his tail.

"Did ye ever hear the like of that, Mansie? Weel, man, I'll explain the hale history of it to ye. Ye see—'Od! how sound that callant's sleeping," continued Isaac; "he's snoring like a nine-year-auld!"

I was glad he had stopped, for I was like to sink through the ground with fear; but no, it would not do.

"Dinna ye ken—sauf us! what a fearsome night this is! The trees will be all broken. What a noise in the lum! I dare say there's some auld hag of a witch-wife gaun to come rumble doun't. It's no the first time, I'll swear. Hae ye a silver sixpence? Wad ye like that?" he bawled up the chimney. "Ye'll hae heard," said he, "lang ago, that a wee murdered wean was buried—didna ye hear a voice? —was buried below that corner—the hearth-stane there, where the laddie's lying on?"

I had now lost my breath, so that I could not stop him.

"Ye never heard tell o't, didna ye? Weel, I'se tell't ye—Sauf us, what swurls of smoke coming doun the chimley—I could swear something no can-

ny's stopping up the lum head—Gang out, and see!"

At that moment, a clap like thunder was heard—the candle was driven over—the sleeping laddie roared "Help!" and "Murder!" and "Thieves!" and, as the furm on which we were sitting played flee backwards, cripple Isaac bellowed out, "I'm dead!—I'm killed—shot through the head!—Oh! oh! oh!"

Surely I had fainted away; for, when I came to myself, I found my red comforter loosed; my face all wet—Isaac rubbing down his waistcoat with his sleeve—the laddie swigging ale out of a bicker—and the brisk brown stout, which, by casting its cork, had caused all the alarm, whizz—whizz—whizzing in the chimney lug.

CHAPTER XI.

TAFFY WITH THE PIGTAIL.

In the sweet shire of Cardigan,
Not far from pleasant Ivor-hall,
An old man dwells, a little man;
I've heard he once was tall.
A long blue livery-coat has he,
That's fair behind and fair before;
Yet, meet him where you will, you see
At once that he is poor.

WORDSWORTH.

It was a clear starry night, in the blasty month of January, I mind it well. The snow had fallen during the afternoon; or, as Benjie came in crying, that "the auld wives o' the norlan sky were plucking their geese;" and it continued dim and dowie till towards the gloaming, when, as the road-side labourers were dandering home from their work, some with pickaxes and others with shools, and just as our cocks and hens were going into their beds, poor things, the lift cleared up to a sharp freeze, and the well-ordered stars came forth glowing over the blue

sky. Between six and seven the moon rose; and I could not get my two 'prentices in from the door, where they were bickering one another with snow-balls, or maybe carhailling the folk on the street in their idle wantonness; so I was obliged for that night to disappoint Edie Macfarlane of the pair of black spatterdashes, he was so anxious to get finish-ed, for dancing in next day, at Souple Jack the car-penter's grand penny-wedding.

Seeing that little more good was to be expected till morning, I came to the resolution of shutting-in half-an-hour earlier than usual; so, as I was carry-ing out the shop-shutters, with my hat over my cowl, for it was desperately sharp, I mostly in my hurry knocked down an auld man, that was coming up to ask me, "if I was Maister Wauch, the tailor and furnisher."

Having told him that I was myself, instead of a better; and having asked him to step in, that I might have a glimpse of his face at the candle, I saw that he was a stranger, dressed in a droll auld-farrant green livery-coat, faced with white. His waistcoat was cut in the Parly-voo fashion, with long lappels, and a double row of buttons down the breast; and round his neck he had a black corded stock, such like, but not so broad, as I afterwards wore in the volunteers, when drilling under Big Sam. He had a well-worn scraper on his head, peaked before and behind, with a bit crape knotted

round it, which he politely took off, making a low bow; and requesting me to bargain with him for a few articles of grand second-hand apparel, which once belonged to his master that was deceased, and which was now carried by himself, in a bundle under his left oxter.

Happening never to make a trade of dealing in this line, and not very sure like as to how the auld man might have come by the bundle in these riotous and knock-him-down times, I swithered a moment, giving my chin a rub, before answering; and then advised him to take a step in at his leisure to St. Mary's Wynd, where he would meet in with merchants in scores. But no; he seemed determined to strike a bargain with me; and I heard from the man's sponsible and feasible manner of speech,—for he was an auld weather-beaten-looking body of a creature, with gleg een, a cock nose, white locks, and a tye behind,—that the claes must have been left him, as a kind of friendly keepsake, by his master, now beneath the mools. Thinking by this, that if I got them at a wanworth, I might boldly venture; I condescended to his loosing down the bundle, which was in a blue silk napkin with yellow flowers. As he was doing this, he told me that he was on his way home from the north to his own country, which lay among the green Welch hills, far away; and that he could not carry much luggage with him, as he was obliged to travel with his baggage tied up in a bun-

dle, on the end of his walking-staff, over his right shoulder.

Pity me! what a grand coat it was! I thought at first it must have been worn on the King's own back, honest man; for it was made of green velvet, and embroidered all round about—back seams, side seams, flaps, lappels, button-holes, nape and cuffs, with gold lace and spangles, in a manner to have dazzled the understanding of any Jew with a beard shorter than his arm. So, no wonder that it imposed on the like of me; and I was mostly ashamed to make him an offer for it of a crown-piece and a dram. The waistcoat, which was of white satin, single-breasted, and done up with silver tinsel in a most beautiful manner, I also bought from him for a couple of shillings, and four hanks of black thread. Though I would on no account or consideration give him a bode for the Hessian boots, which, having cuddy-heels and long silk tossels, were by far and away over grand for the like of a tailor, such as me, and fit for the Sunday's wear of some fashionable Don of the first water. However, not to part uncivilly, and be as good as my word, I brought ben Nanse's bottle, and gave him a cawker at the shop counter; and, after taking a thimbleful to myself, to drink a good journey to him, I bade him take care of his feet, as the causeway was frozen, and saw the auld flunkie safely over the strand with a candle.

Ye may easily conceive that Nanse got a surprise, when I paraded ben to the room with the grand coat and waistcoat on, holding up my head, putting my hands into the haunch pockets, and strutting about more like a peacock, than a douce elder of Maister Wiggie's kirk; so just as, thinking shame of myself, I was about to throw it off, I found something bulky at the bottom of the side pocket, which I discovered to be a wheen papers, fastened together with green tape. Finding they were written in a real neat hand, I put on my spectacles, and sending up the close for James Batter, we sat round the fireside, and read away like nine-year-aulds.

The next matter of consideration was, whether, in buying the coat as it stood, the paper belonged to me, or the auld flunkie waiting-servant with the peaked hat. James and me after an hour and a half's argle-bargleing pro and con, in the way of parliament-house lawyers, came at last to be unanimously of opinion, that, according to the auld Scotch proverb of

> "He that finds keeps,
> And he that loses seeks,"

whatever was part or pendicle of the coat at the time of purchase, when it hung exposed for sale over the white-headed Welchman's little finger, became, according to the law of nature and nations, as James Batter wisely observed, part and pendicle of the

property of me, Mansie Wauch, the legal purchaser.

Notwithstanding all this, however, I was not sincerely convinced in my own conscience; and I dare say if the creature had cast up, and come seeking them back, I would have found myself bound to make restitution. This is not now likely to happen; for twenty long years have come and passed away, like the sunshine of yesterday, and neither word nor wittens of the body have been seen or heard tell of; so, according to the course of nature, being a white-headed auld man, with a pigtail, when the bargain was made, his dust and bones have, in all likelihood, long ago mouldered down beneath the green truff of his own mountains, like his granfaither's before him. This being the case, I daresay it is the reader's opinion, as well as my own, that I am quite at liberty to make what use of them I like. Concerning the poem-things that come first in hand, I do not pretend to be any judge; but James thinks he could scarcely write any muckle better himself: so here goes; but I cannot tell you to what tune:

SONG.

I.

They say that other eyes are bright,
I see no eyes like thine,
So full of Heaven's serenest light,
Like midnight stars they shine.

II.

They say that other cheeks are fair—
But fairer cannot glow
The rosebud in the morning air,
Or blood on mountain snow.

III.

Thy voice—Oh sweet it streams to me,
And charms my raptur'd breast;
Like music on the moonlight sea,
When waves are lull'd to rest.

IV.

The wealth of worlds were vain to give
Thy sinless heart to buy;
Oh I will bless thee while I live,
And love thee till I die!

From this song it appears a matter beyond doubt —for I know human nature—that the flunkie's master had, in his earlier years, been deeply in love with some beautiful young lady, that loved him again, and that maybe, with a bounding and bursting heart, durst not let her affection be shewn, from dread of her cruel relations, who insisted on her marrying some lord or baronet that she did not care one button about. If so, unhappy pair, I pity them! Were [illegible] guess our way in the dark a wee farther, I think it not altogether unlikely, that he must have fallen in with his sweetheart abroad, when wandering about on his travels; for what follows seems to

come as it were from her, lamenting his being called to leave her forlorn, and return home. This is all merely supposition on my part, and in the antiquarian style, whereby much is made out of little; but both me and James Batter are determined to be unanimously of this opinion, until otherwise convinced to the contrary. Love is a fiery and fierce passion everywhere; but I am told that we, who live in a more favoured land, know very little of the terrible effects it sometimes causes, and the bloody tragedies, which it has a thousand times produced, where the heart of man is uncontrolled by reason or religion, and his blood heated into a raging fever, by the burning sun that glows in the heaven above his head.

Here follows the poem of Taffy's master's foreign sweetheart, which, considering it to be a woman's handiwork, is, I daresay, not that far amiss.

SONG OF THE SOUTH.

I.

Of all the garden flowers
The fairest is the rose;
Of winds that stir the bowers,
Oh! there is none that blows
Like the south—the gentle south—
For that balmy breeze is ours.

II.

Cold is the frozen north;
In its stern and savage mood,
'Mid gales, come drifting forth
Bleak snows and drenching flood:
But the south—the gentle south,
Thaws to love the willing blood.

III.

Bethink thee of the vales,
With their birds and blossoms fair,—
Of the darkling nightingales,
That charm the starry air,
In the south—the gentle south;
Ah! our own dear home is there.

IV.

Where doth Beauty brightest glow,
With each rich and radiant charm,
Eyes of light, and brow of snow,
Cherry lip, and bosom warm?
In the south—the gentle south,
There she waits, and works her harm.

V.

Say, shines the Star of Love,
From the clear and cloudless sky,
The shadowy groves above,
Where the nestling ringdoves lie?
From the south—the gentle south—
Gleams its lone and lucid eye.

VI.

Then turn ye to the home
Of your brethren and your bride;
Far astray your steps may roam,
And more joys for thee abide,
In the south—our gentle south,—
Than in all the world beside.

Having right and law on my side, as any man of judgment may see with half an eye, nothing could hinder me, if I liked, to print the whole bundle; but, in the meantime, we must be satisfied with one story, which I have picked out. All that I have set down concerning myself, the reader may take on credit, as open and even-down truth; but as to whether the following story be true or false, every one is at liberty to think for himself. Unless I saw a proper affidavit, I would not, for my own part, prin my faith to a single word of it.

THE CURATE OF SUVERDSIO.

A TALE OF THE SWEDISH REVOLUTION.

He says he loves my daughter;
I think so too; for never gazed the moon
Upon the water, as he'll stand and read,
As 'twere my daughter's eyes; and, to be plain,
I think there is not half a kiss to choose,
Who loves another best.

Winter's Tale.

THE ancient Chroniclers of Sweden, give a melancholy account of the state of their country, under the oppressive tyranny of Christiern the Second, King of Denmark, who, stung to phrenzy by the generous spirit of independence that actuated the senate, in opposing the degradations to which he was continually endeavouring to subject it, gave reins at length to the bloodthirstiness of his disposition, in the awful massacre of Stockholm.

Before the perpetration of this merciless act, which

clothed one half of the nation in the garments of mourning, and plunged all in sorrow, murmurs were heard from many a tongue in many a quarter; half stifled imprecations and threats of vengeance mingling themselves with the voice of lamentation; and all seemed only to await a signal, looking around with impatience for some one, whose sense of wrongs or natural hardihood might stimulate him to be the first in throwing down the gauntlet of defiance, and sounding the trumpet of rebellion. Yet so paralyzed was the common mind, by the horrid spectacle which had been exhibited, that amazement and terror conspired to keep all in check; and, while the more enterprising began to regard the revolution they meditated as hopeless or desperate, the more wavering abandoned the scheme of taking up arms altogether, as one fraught with utter desolation and necessary ruin.

To render the misery of the country complete, an immense number of names blackened the roll of proscription, and almost certain death was the fate of every fugitive who succeeded not in effecting escape. At the time about which our little tale opens, this began to become an almost impossible matter, from the exposed nature of the country, the danger of travelling among the hills, and the general poverty of the peasants, combined with the dread they entertained of harbouring those, over whose heads hung the Damoclan sword of Danish vengeance. The

approach of winter rendered the sum of their miseries complete; for what more dismal can be conceived than for wretches who have no home, to be obliged to wander over the frozen hills in the darkness, and to hide among the forests during the daylight, subsisting on whatever means the chance goodness of providence might afford; paying when it was in their power, or trusting in pennyless poverty to the gushing forth of human benevolence, a spring which, to the honour of our nature, is not always frozen up in the bosom of man. For such was the panic struck into all hearts by the massacre of the nobility in senate assembled, and the butchery in cold blood of the crowds who thronged the streets of the capital, without respect of sex, age, or person, that almost none on whom suspicion of independent principles rested, durst show their faces in the towns, from fear of military violence, or the hazard of being informed on, and delivered up by the harpies, in whom the love of money extinguished every nobler principle, not only submitting quietly to the tyranny of Denmark, but betraying for wages the patriotic children of their own land.

The province of Dalecarlia, from its mountainous and almost inaccessible nature, was one of the principal places wherein the fugitives sought shelter; and not the less, from its being the last division of Sweden that had submitted to foreign tyranny. The population was necessarily thin, and scattered

over a vast extent, there being scarcely a place worthy the appellation of a town, in the whole district; while the villages were widely dispersed over the edges of the boundless forests of pine, birch, and fir, and over the banks of the lakes and rivers that intersect the country. These villages, moreover, were not like those in the other provinces of Sweden, under the control of some particular nobleman or gentleman; but were governed by the peasantry, who exercised among themselves the right of choosing governors, either to lead them to the field of battle, or to settle disputes in the case of civil differences. So high had they carried this spirit of independence, that no government durst send either troops or garrisons into this province, without giving sufficient pledges to the natives for the preservation of their immunities; while, from the dread of their discovering that obedience on their part might be, if they so willed, only a matter of choice, a few skins formed the solitary tax ever levied; and no attempt at innovation was ever made on their ancient customs;—being thus what La Vendee has been to France, or the Tyrol to Switzerland.

It was towards nightfall, that a traveller approached the hamlet of Suverdsio, among these rugged and sequestered hills. The sun had just sunk beneath the horizon, and the thick fir woods that stretched as far as the eye could reach, over the mountains and down into the vallies, were beginning, especially in

the lower grounds, to wear a blue and sombre aspect. The clouds, drifted by the sharp winds, hurried over to the west; and flakes of snow came whirling down upon the rocks, in the angles of which the withered leaves went eddying round with a desolate noise. The stranger felt accordingly that it was no time to stand on ceremony; so, walking through the little grass court in front of the parsonage, a high-roofed antique-looking building, at the hither extremity of the little village, he tapped at the deep low-browed door, and begged quarters for the night. Fortunately for the success of his request, the Curate himself chanced to be at home; else the only other inmates of his home—his pretty daughter, and a young woman that attended them—might have hesitated about receiving under the roof, during such dangerous times, any one who petitioned for what, in more peaceful days, no one within would have dreamt of refusing.

Without any but mere general questions being asked, the evening passed on, and supper was spread for their guest of the best that the house afforded, which was dried deer's flesh broiled, and a dish of grout. As is generally the case in savage or mountainous countries, hospitality was a virtue among the Dalecarlians, the neglect of which infallibly entailed disgrace. But the Curate was not of those who are actuated more by the dread of displeasure than by the delight which the exercise of

the gentler feelings brings to their possessor. Far removed from ostentation and the bustle of active life, his care was the preservation of the flock, whose souls had been consigned to his keeping. Though possessing talents, he looked not around for the passing dignities of this life, but forward to the unfading brilliancies of the next. The scion of an unambitious family, he had taken root in the family spot—his father and his grandfather having preceded him in the same cure; and already the silver hairs of age were mingling with the natural black, to warn him that another generation was springing up around him, before which his own must necessarily pass away. Yet what needed he to care for a wider sphere, when all that he bore regard to in life were around him,—his beloved, and loving flock—his beautiful and dutiful daughter—the moss-grown tombs of his fathers,—and the more recent and carefully preserved grave of his wife. This last relic was not the one that had least influence over his mind, in knitting it to the loneliness of Suverdsio; for to Grethe Hannson he had been early attached; he had married her in pure love, and had lived with her in perfect happiness, till the arm of death had been suddenly outstretched between them, leaving him, while yet in the maturity of life, a mournful widower. But she had not all perished; for a daughter, the very image of her whom heaven had taken away, grew up at his feet, and soothed his

solitary hours;—while sorrow at length gradually softening down into resignation, he looked abroad on nature with a more cheerful eye, delighting in the society of a child, whose buoyant disposition filled his solitude with delight, and rendered even the bare rocks around him a 'type of paradise. So much we find is happiness the product of our own souls.

When supper was over, and the crescent moon shone down on the dewy window-sill, the daughter retired from table, leaving her father to entertain their guest, and enjoy his conversation. She went into the adjoining kitchen, where by the light of a lamp, her servant, or rather female companion, was busied in knitting; and seating herself by the fire, opened a book of old national songs and stories, which she took an especial delight in conning over, as her young fancy rioted among the wars and loves, and superstitions of the olden time. She was in the act of reading one of the legends relating to Holger Danske, the great ogre of northern romance, and her friend Katherine sate listening in delighted attention. The wind sighed—but only from without; the faggots crackled; the kitten gambolled on the hearth, and all was cheerful, when Katherine stopped her by putting her finger on her arm, saying, "Hist—did you not hear something?"

On listening a moment, they heard louder words than those of ordinary talk, proceeding from the

room wherein were the Curate and his guest;—ever and anon the tread of feet, as some one leisurely measured the apartment;—and then a hushing sound, as if silence had been imposed on their conversation, from the probability of its being overheard.

Margaret, whose love for her father was surpassing, was not a little anxious in mind, especially as the person she had admitted was a perfect stranger, and might conceal designs under specious appearances, which in the existing so troubled state of the country, might eventually be calculated to bring them into distress. Personal harm to her parent she dreaded none—for beholding the reverence in which he was universally held, and the respect paid to his every word and action, her innocence imagined that the fame of his virtues and sanctity pervaded the world,—and that the injuring a single hair of his head would be regarded as an atrocity amounting almost to sacrilege. Above her father she seemed always to behold the arm of protecting omnipotence stretched out; and rejoiced in the inward confidance, that no breathing creature could harbour a malicious design against one, the sound of whose name was wafted like a healing balsam to the cottager by his valley fireside, and to the solitary mountaineer, watching his straggled flocks on the hill of storms.

A short time elapsed, in which some feeling of suspense was indeed predominant; but, at length,

the door opening, the Curate was seen standing in the threshold with a light in his hand; and he called to Margaret to bring him the keys of the church and his hat.

The stranger followed, muffled up in a large woollen cloak with which he had been supplied, and carrying over his arm a coverlet, which Margaret had brought at the command of her father. The Curate led the way, with the large rusty keys of the church in one hand, and a spacious circular horn lantern in the other. The night was still gusty, and scattery white clouds were fleeing like evil spirits across the sky, dimming the radiance of the declining moon. Having opened a postern door, which led through a small garden, at the foot of which rippled a clear streamlet amid its bordering willows, and crossed a narrow wooden bridge, whose whitened planks glittered with the sparry lustre of hoar-frost, they found themselves on the pathway that terminated at the neighbouring church.

The church itself was an old fantastic-looking Gothic structure, of inconsiderable extent, with a conical spire at the western angle, buttressed walls, with oblong diced windows in the inter-spaces, and a large low-browed door in the eastern gable. All around wore the melancholy aspect of hoar antiquity; and, amid a scene so solitary and deserted, life and living things seemed to have passed away, and the sharp-horned moon looked as if setting in the last

night of the world. Every thing was silent, except the savage winds, tossing in transitory gusts the dry branches of the black pines, or moaning with unearthly voices through the crevices of the grey building,—whose shadow, falling like a black mantle over the silent field of graves, might have shaped it out to the eye of fancy as Loke, or some of the other monstrous impersonations of the Scandinavian mythology, keeping guard, with malignant scowl, over a region desecrated to his dominion.

The Vicar led his guest through the body of the building into the sacristy, where was a small fireplace, supplied with dry faggots ready to be lighted. The blankets were spread out over some deal seats, which made a tolerable substitute for a bedstead. In a little while the hearth crackled and began to blaze cheerily, lighting up the gloomy walls, and dispelling the damp mouldy smell of the atmosphere, while the stranger began to feel himself in a situation more secure and comfortable than he had experienced for a considerable time before. So when the Curate, after some little stay and conversation, wished him a good night, and locked, one after another, the great creaking doors behind him, he wrapped him in his coverlet, and lay down, glad, after the fatigues of his many wanderings, to enjoy a sound and refreshing slumber, and little scrupulous where that slumber visited him.

The superstitions of the dark ages, notwithstand-

ing the enlightening influence of Christianity, still sullenly brooded over the remote districts of the country; and the peasantry were yet almost universally governed by the belief in omens and presentiments, and the visitations of disembodied spirits; to say nothing of the older mythological traditions, whereby every vale and hill had its legend of supernatural dread. The shepherd and the huntsman knew well the Elle people, who dwell in the Elle moors, bathing in the yellow flood of moon-beams; and had often heard the fair young Elle women playing on their magical stringed instruments, to entice the unwary to destruction. Often had they seen the malignant Trolls gambolling in rings on the green straths, with their grey coats, and tall peaked red caps; and, on awakening in the morning, had discovered, with pleased surprise, that the industrious Nis had put the whole house in order. But to sleep in a church—a solitary church surrounded with graves—companionless and alone!—no such adventurous thought could have sustained itself in the boldest of their bosoms. Well did they know of spectres that held nightly conclave there; and even should they escape these, was there not the awful Kirkegrim, who had his continual home in the sanctuary, and who would freeze the blood in the veins of any one foolhardy enough to be the midnight guest of such a landlord. Not so judged our stranger, or if feelings like these ever crossed his

mind, the remembrance of more imminent dangers, or the strong opiate of fatigue, thoroughly quenched and overcame them. Though susceptible, his mind was not of that morbidly irritable kind which allows itself to be borne down with the pressure of imaginary horrors. He had braved actual risks; and endured bodily hardships too heavily and often, to stoop down to the dominion of fancy; while his mind, enlightened by education, had shut itself up to feelings that yet were wildly alive in the bosoms of the ignorant and simple. His thoughts were of another cast; his fears were of a higher kind. His kindred had been mown down by the scythe of the tyrant; and he felt with a burning eagerness the miserable degradation of his native country. Yet as these thoughts and feelings passed less actively through his mind, he sunk into profound repose; and his dreams, if he had any, were more soothing and pleasant than he had been lately accustomed to.

When the Curate approached his own door, he found his child anxiously awaiting him in the doorway; and, as she took the light from him, she said tenderly, "Bless thee, my father. Oh, how glad am I that you have come safe back to us!"

"Margaret," replied the Curate, taking her by the hand, "Margaret, my dear child, there needed no such violent expression of affection. I have been running no risks. I have been encountering no dangers, farther than showing a noble houseless fel-

low-creature to a very miserable bed-chamber; but it is the best, at least the securest we have to offer. May he have a sound sleep. But hearken to me—" and so saying he preceded her into the parlour.

"Well, father?"

"While that stranger is in our keeping," said the Curate, "the utmost secrecy must be preserved. Hint not of having seen any one—mention not to a creature that we have a strange man in hiding. Would that I could do him a service: his cause—our cause, for it is the cause of heaven and humanity—demands it; and, Margaret, as I am often called on holy errands from home, great part of the duty of attending upon him, and supplying his necessary wants, may devolve on thee; for I would not for a world's wealth that——"

"Oh, assuredly, father!" answered Margaret, kindled as it were by a sudden emotion, whose glow lighted up her beautiful features. "I trust you shall never find me wanting in charity to the distressed."

"Call it not charity, daughter!" said the Curate. "It is in this case especially duty,—imperative duty. Know you that our guest is one of the persecuted patriots—one of the men of whom our dastardly tameness is unworthy?"

At mention of these words her cheek paled; and she pressed her hand to her side, as if some pain at her heart impeded her breathing, which, in a mo-

ment after, heaved her bosom more tumultuously. "Sure then, father, he does not come from this quarter of the land," she said; "at least I do not remember having ever seen him before?"

"Oh, I dare say not," was the reply. "But, whether stranger or not, you know your duty; and I need not repeat my instructions to you. Say nothing on the subject to any one; and see that you have breakfast ready for me betimes to carry him in the morning; for not kings themselves, nor even enthusiasts, can live entirely on air. See then that you mind, child."

"It was lucky, father," said Margaret, "that he came not hither to us sooner. If he had been in the house the other day, when the wild Copenhagen horsemen came rummaging about, turning the world upside down, perhaps,—but there is no saying!"

"That is the most inconclusive remark, Margaret, that ever flowed from the lip of man or maiden," said the Curate, smiling. "If you had been living at the time of the flood, with Noah and Shem, then, perhaps,—but there is no saying!"

"Ah, father, you are hard upon me; for you know he might have been taken,—dragged from our hearth,—and hanged on the first tree; as was done with Ulric Staaden's lodger the other week."

"Well, Margaret," said the Curate, "I heartily rejoice with you that he has thus far escaped them; and let us hope the best for the future."

"Did he not mention Regner Beron?" added Margaret, with somewhat of a sheepish look, as if the question did some little violence to her bashfulness. "Ah, father, you might have asked something about him—you know that he is not unrelated to us by blood. That he was born in our district, and was my playmate, when we were young, very young, and happy creatures. To be sure now he is a soldier—or lately was—and it is difficult to say for whom, or against whom he carries arms. I hope, for old acquaintance sake, that heaven has directed him!"

"Tuts, child," said the Curate, "have you not forgotten that idle forester yet? It were better for him to have kept at shooting his snipes and woodcocks, his white hares and brown foxes, than to have taken up a trade about which he knew less; when his only likely reward was the getting his neck in jeopardy, whichever way he decided. Don't you think so?"

"Then you think he did wrong, father?"

"Come, come," said the Curate, as he turned from her with a smile; "'tis but an hour from midnight; let the household prepare for rest,—and let us mind our own matters, leaving others to judge for themselves; and, committing the care of our state to him, who sent the ravens to Elijah, and armed the pebble with destruction, that, slung from the arm of a

shepherd boy, smote the forehead of the deriding Philistine.

If the sleep of the stranger in the chapel, surrounded with many a ghastly monument of human decay, was soothing and sound, full of refreshment, that of Margaret, in the endearing home of her parent, was far from being so. She now dreamt of the stranger,—of his tall and portly appearance,—of the impressive dignity of his countenance, undimmed by the cloud that overhung his brow,—of the mysterious altercation, for so it seemed, with her father,—and of his sequestred abode in the old church. Now she dreamt that Regner Beron was returned to the home of his childhood; and that she wandered with him amid the woods, beside the old castle of his ancestors, on whose tall, grey tower, as of yore, the wall-flower sprinkled its yellow blossoms, and the wild pigeons cooed, basking themselves in the pleasant sunshine. Anon, she thought that she stood by her own door, in the mellow glow of autumnal evening, watching his return from his sylvan sports, with his heavy game-pouch at his side, his gun slung over his shoulder, and his faithful black hound, Grotten, trudging behind him. Again, the vision changing, she sate with him in her father's church, while now and then his eloquent glances told her, that her image divided the empire of his thoughts with better things; while suddenly the figures dying away, she

beheld him with his sword buckled upon his side, and his staff in his hand, as on that morning when he bade adieu to her at the door of her home, and lingered with the handle of the outer gate between his fingers, to cast a last, fond glance on her, still loitering at the threshold-step.

So passed over the greater portion of the night, and the early flush of dawn tinged her eastward-looking lattice with crimson, and she was greeted by the salute of the already awakened thrush, ere her feelings were more completely quenched in slumber. This quiet repose she did not however long enjoy, for the abrupt opening of her chamber-door in a short time startled her. "Not yet awake, child," said her father, as he entered, buttoning his large shaggy cloak, with a broad brimmed hat slouched over his ears to protect him from the chill air. "I am sent for to visit old Magnus Vere, who, it seems, has been wantonly wounded by some villains, who, in the name of the Danish government, have been over-night searching his house, in the hopes of discovering some particular Stockholm fugitives, whom they have traced to this neighbourhood. Good morning, Margaret. It seems I must hurry on, if I wish to see him in life, for he cannot last above a few hours."

"Oh, monsters!" said Margaret, "to murder a good harmless old man, who must have been inno-

cent of all crime against church or state, in the mere wantonness of disappointed blood-thirstiness. Who knows, father, what may yet be our own fate!"

"Let us do our duty, Margaret, trusting in heaven. Let us fear God, and have no other fear."

"Poor old soul!—Poor old Magnus Vere! Shall I then never behold him more. It was but last week he brought me branches of evergreen to deck our dwelling! All last summer he brought me bunches of beautiful flowers from his garden—such flowers as are not to be found elsewhere, all the country round. And the pot of honey last September. Ah! the kind old man, he never forgot us, father; he was always finding out something he thought would please us."

"Well, Margaret, let me not forget him. Nor do you forget to carry breakfast betimes to our stranger in the church. Make not the smallest ado about the matter; but let silence and secrecy go hand-in-hand."

"Oh! stay but for a moment, father. How shall I communicate this dreadful business to our poor Katherine? It will go far, I fear, to break her heart, for she loves her old parent most tenderly."

"That misery is saved you, Margaret, as she herself received the messenger, and is by this time at her father's bedside. So farewell again; and again see that you neglect not our guest. Tell him the

cause of my absence. I will be back betimes. Good morning, child."

Margaret lay for a little absorbed in melancholy, and pondering over the terrible vicissitudes of mortal life. She felt on what holds we rested our hopes of happiness; and how, in an hour, the paradise of this world may be left to us desolate. Her mother was with the dead; she had small remembrance of her, for she had been summoned away while yet she was but four summers old; but she took a delight in the mournful duty of keeping her grave-turf free from weeds, and scattering over it the earliest flowers of the spring. Her father was now rapidly declining into the vale of years; and, in the course of nature, a separation might not be very distant; but the troubled state of her native land filled her bosom with additional fears. "Last night," she said to herself, "Katherine chatted and laughed with me—a merry creature. She lay down on her pillow in happiness—she hath risen up from it in sorrow. She had then a father, as I have now,—alas! how fares it with her at this moment!" And here she wiped away the large drops that rushed burningly over her cheeks.

The good Curate was, in the mean while, pursuing his journey; but, ere he reached the cottage of Magnus Vere, his wife and daughter were looking along the road, wearying for his approach—and no wonder;

for immediately on his entering, he perceived, from the features of the old man, that the wounds he had received were mortal, and that a few hours must probably terminate the struggle. Magnus was, however, still sensible, and told his story with simple distinctness.

It seems, on the previous afternoon, one well known to them both, Regner Beron, the son of Magnus' old master, had, in disguise, come to the cottage, soliciting a night's lodging, which, having been freely granted, he had, in the course of the evening, disclosed himself; informing the family, in whom he reposed the strictest confidence, that he had travelled for a long way over the mountains in company with another fugitive, whom he had brought to that part of the country for greater security, and directed for shelter for the night to the dwelling of the Curate. It fell out, however, just as they were preparing to retire to rest, that the sound of horses' feet approaching created an alarm; and that Beron, stealing cautiously to the door, had recognised the party, though in the dusk, as the Danish dragoons, who were in strict search among the hills for the proscribed fugitives, particularly for some of the nobles, who were presumed to have taken that direction—and his ready perception saved his life; for he had succeeded in concealing himself amid a tuft of hay, by the side of the door, till the entrance of the pursuers enabled him to make off unperceived to the woods. Unfortunately, however, for the fate of

his host, he had, in his precipitation, left his cloak behind, which being recognised, and the search proving ineffectual, the party threatened instant death to Magnus if he did not on the instant give up the refugee into their hands. On finding that this could not be accomplished, the ruffians, in dastardly revenge, had wounded the old man in several places with their swords and the butts of their pistols, leaving him on his own floor for dead, weltering in his blood.

The Curate found that he just had come in time to administer the last consolations of religion; for, in a little while, he remarked the long-drawn heavy breathing, the paling cheek, and the glazing eye of the old man; and, as he felt the fluttering pulse, he observed the cloud of death mantling around him, silently and almost imperceptibly, as the dews of night congeal, harden, and crust over the green leaf in the early frost of morning.

The latest request of the old man, before he died, was, that the Curate should exercise the same care over his daughter as he had hitherto done; and that, in her young and inexperienced years, he should be her guardian and protector.

Before the event had taken place which left the wife of old Magnus a widow, and his daughter an orphan, Margaret had been busying herself in preparations for breakfasting their hidden guest. She felt a degree of timid reluctance to set out on her

walk, but her scruples were overcome by a sense of duty, though when she turned the key in the old grating lock of the church-door, her heart fluttered like that of a newly-caught bird.

The stranger who was already engaged in looking over some papers that lay scattered on the little table before him, rumpled them up into a heap at her approach, and rising from his seat, wished her a good morning with a smiling countenance, which shewed to Margaret at once that neither Kirkegrim, the spirit of the church, nor any other of the unearthly wanderers of night had paid him a visit in his lonely sleeping place. His erect and gallant demeanour, the nobleness of his features, the portliness of his step, and the grace attendant on every movement, made her conscious at once that the person before whom she stood was no common man, and awed her in a moment into a reserve that was scarcely in keeping with the gentle openness of her nature. But the breath of a few passing words served to clear away the chilling cloud of restraint, for the stranger was one in whom benignity of disposition was conjoined with gentility of manners—a conjunction which is often to be met with, and ought always to be inseparable—so in a little she was asking questions, and he answering them in the flow of conversation, with the unrestrained confidings as of old acquaintanceship.

There was one topic, however, which she kept

aloof from, though it more than once trembled on her tongue. Sometimes she hoped he might stumble upon it, and sometimes she resolved to question boldly. In this she was disappointed; in that she disappointed herself. Need we say that the subject was Regner Beron?

Some hours passed over in solitude; and, save the murmur of the daws, that fluttered about the roof, in the crevices of which they had probably nestled their summer young, all living sounds were silent. The only light of his dormitory flowed in through two narrow slips near the roof, so that it served only to show him the progress of time, as the lazy sunbeams crawled slowly from west to east along the opposite wall. Communion with his own thoughts was however a subject with which the stranger had been long and intimately conversant; and he was lost in a reverie of the past or the future, at the instant when the grating of the church door awakened him up, with the warning that some one approached. It was the Curate.

"Good day," said the reverend man, on entering. "I have been long of waiting upon you, and I doubt not you have been somewhat impatient on your part. But I have been delayed in the execution of a mournful office. I have been closing the eyes of an honest man and old friend;"—and then he repeated the catastrophe which had happened, and the escape of Beron.

"Then he has escaped safely?" cried the stranger, starting from his seat, and looking anxiously at the Curate. "I trust in heaven it may be so!"

"So it is hoped—at least no harm has overtaken him so far as it is known. I know his acquaintance with the mountain passes hereabout; nor can he be followed in them by his pursuers without the assistance of our native guides, whom they shall find unwilling or [illegible] not at all. He has taken to the [illegible] I doubt not, and if so, I entertain no fears of his having eluded them."

"I hope so [illegible] sincerely," said the stranger, resuming his seat with more composure. "Should it be otherwise, I vow to heaven——"

"Make no rash vows," said the Curate, interrupting him. "Especially when the blood of man is so likely to be spilt in their fulfilment."

"Ah!" resumed the stranger, "you think me impetuous—probably I am so. But knew you how valuable the life of Regner Beron is to our cause! Knew you the importance of the commissions with which he is intrusted! Knew you that the soul of our country may in a manner be said to be at this moment in his hands, then you would sympathize in my irritability, and overlook my rashness! Speaking with regard to myself, I, too, have a deep personal interest in his fate; for he was once the means of rescuing me from destruction, at a moment of the

most imminent peril, when we fought together under the standards of the same regiment."

"I rejoice to hear, sir," said the Curate, "for the honour of our poor district, that one of our sons has been conducting himself as he ought."

"It was he too," continued the stranger, "who conducted me to this comfortable asylum; where I have found more indeed than he even promised me."

"Talk not of that," said the Curate. "Heaven prospers the right cause, and all may yet be well. You said that Beron was to journey to Mora;—I have no doubt that he is already far on his way thither."

"And as to the poor old man who has innocently suffered in our cause!" said the stranger not a little affected, "it is miserable that our safety cannot be effected but by throwing our protectors into danger, making the exercise of hospitality a risk, and Christian charity a crime beyond the pale of forgiveness. Let it not be so, I beseech you, between us. Though, confiding in your honour, I have thrown myself into your arms, let not threatened destruction fall on your house for my sake; and, if concealment cannot be effected without the shedding of innocent blood, give me up at once: for better is death itself, than a life which would be rendered miserable by the bitterness of unavailing contrition."

"I trust," said the Curate with a smile, "that there may be no need to act on your generous warnings. But may I ask you, were you really at Stockholm at the season of the massacre? Did you actually witness the scenes, which, even here in our secure mountain solitudes, caused our hair to stand on end with horror?"

The mention of that atrocious manifestation of tyranny seemed at once to kindle fire in the veins of the stranger; and he paced to and fro, with a hurried step, for a little while in silence; then, halting in a more settled state, there was yet a brokenness in the tones of his voice as he replied—

"No, my friend, I was not present. Had it been so, my duty to the state would have found me that day with the senate, whose bloody fate I must have shared. As it is, I have been spared, not for my own worthiness—but it may be to avenge their blood! Before that day I had a father—I had friends —I had a home. When the sun of that evening went down, it left me the forlorn being you now find me. Could I sit down in silence, and aimlessly lament the bitter doom which had been allotted? That was not, thank Heaven, in my nature; nor, if it had, would such apathy have been allowed me. I speedily discovered that a mark had been also set on my brow, as one of the crowd who would draw the sword of revolution whenever opportunity occurred; and that my name was not the last on the

roll of the proscribed. Such is the degenerate nature of man, that no sooner was this known, than my body-servant, a man who had eaten of my bread for years, made an attempt to deliver me up into the hands of the foe; but may ingratitude ever meet with a reward like his."

"What became of the villain?" asked the Curate.

"The subject is unworthy wasting breath about," answered the stranger; "but when an armed party entered my chamber under his directions, and found their prize gone, they turned round on the informer, accused him of having permitted my escape for a bribe, and shot him on the spot. Since then, I have been hunted from hiding-place to hiding-place like a wild beast, fearing the beams of that sun whose illumination streams so beautifully in upon our wall at this moment, and finding safety only in the darkness of night."

"Terrible, terrible indeed," said the Curate. "But let us live in the prospect of better days. Winter lasts not all the year round; and the volcano ceases to rage when its fires have burnt themselves away. You say that you have seen service in the army; but, tush!—I fear my curiosity is impertinent. We mountaineers are proverbially fond of prying into other folk's business; but——"

"No—no—free shall be my answers, as your questions are free and friendly. Perhaps you may have heard of Gustavus Vasa, one of our generals of

horse? Beron and myself belonged to his regiment, and have seen some service with him."

"Oh yes," said the Curate, "I have heard of him, and well. 'Tis said he is yet but a young man. Is he not?"

"Much about my own age, I dare say. Poor soul! he is, no doubt, like the rest of us, a fugitive among the hills, grieving in heart to see Sweden in fetters. Perhaps we may yet hear his trumpet-call!"

"I trust we shall," answered the Curate. "He is well spoken of by his true-hearted countrymen: and may the names of the loyal ever sound like echoes of terror in the ears of the savage Dane, our oppressor."

"Trust not, friend," said the stranger, "to thy sanguine expectations in any one. The chance of our restoration to freedom dwells not, luckily, in individual hands, but in unison. The solitary tree is torn up by the winds; but the thick black forest bids defiance to the assailing tempest: the single reed is easily broken; but the bunch defies the knee of the giant. However, as I have faith in man, I reckon Gustavus, wherever he may be, true to our cause."

"And there is Admiral Norbi? Is there not?"

"True, there is. But we must reckon scrupulously. In some bosoms ambition occupies a larger space than patriotism; still let us judge charitably.

The Admiral is valiant, and a dangerous foe if not a safe friend. Whatever his designs towards our cause may be, his wishes towards Christiern are sinister enough. Did you hear of his hopes regarding the administrator's widow?"

"Hopes!—you do not allude to marriage."

"Then," said the stranger, "that sunlight o'er our heads has no reference to day."

"If so, then farewell to our prospects from that quarter!" said the Curate. "The craftiness of the politician hath overcome the honesty of the sailor. Too much power hath corrupted the singleness of his heart. Being Governor of Gothland, he needed not to have Calmar, the second post I suppose in our territory, under his jurisdiction. It was a bribe —a base bribe. The sword has been put into his hand sharpened by tyranny; but before it be again sheathed, nobler ambition may rouse him to turn its edge against the breast of the common oppressor."

"Think ye," said the stranger, "that your Church has remained incorruptible? Know ye not that he has been dealing most liberally with your benefices?"

"In what respect, and where?" asked the Curate, while the glow of indignation and scorn passed over his features.

"Have you not then heard how he has nominated his minions of Upsal and Odensee to the Bishopricks of Stregnez and Scara?"

"By sacred Heaven! 'tis a shameless infringe-

ment on the rules our Church—our Church!" added the Curate with a smile of derision. "The voice of reason, and the Holy Book, which it is pretended we expound, shout in our ears the heinous iniquities of a perverting and iniquitous system!"

"Say not so," interrupted the stranger hastily. "Your master, the Pope, hath sanctioned and sanctified his doings."

"Be it so, then!" said the Curate, warmly; "his authority I have long despised in my heart, as a forgery ingrafted on the only true religion. May the swords unsheathed for our restoration to the civil rights of freemen, disdain their scabbards till they have cut asunder the cords of spiritual bondage! 'Tis true I was born in the Papal faith—I was educated in the Papal faith—I have been a minister of the Papal faith from my youth upwards, until this day. But time, custom, self-interest, have not been able to blind mine eyes to its crookedness—to its mummeries—to its monstrous absurdities. Now throw I off the mantle of hypocrisy, which, thoughtlessly, I have worn too long—but shall wear no longer!"

"Softly, reverend friend," said the stranger, taking the Curate by the hand; "thou art an honest man; and, without reference to thy caution, I admire thy simple uprightness. My sentiments are as thine—cordially are as thine; and though gloomy be our prospects at this moment, as the scowl of a

Lapland winter, the day, I trust, is not very far distant, when we shall have strength to dash the giant Oppression in the dust, and live in the sunshine of equitable laws and religious freedom. Doth not the stench of tyrannical corruption ascend from the shackled valleys up to us even here, infecting the pure fresh air of our native mountains?"

"Take, then, my hand upon it," said the Curate; "and, though my holy calling forbids my bearing arms, I shall aid in the general cause to the utmost of my poor ability. I shall explain—and exhort—and admonish. I shall preach boldly, and be not afraid; nor shall I think my life lost should it be thrown away in the service.—Who has been appointed Viceroy—have ye not heard?"

"Another of your favoured churchmen—Theodore, Archbishop of Lunden."

"Oh! shame—shame—shame to the profligacy of the church!—I wash my hands from the foul iniquity!"

"And know ye what is the first act of his administration? He has set a price upon the head of General Gustavus, and dispersed horsemen over the country, with commission to put the proscribed to the sword wherever they can be found."

"Enough—enough!" said the Curate, holding up his clenched hand. "Why trembles not Earth under her burthen of iniquity?—I must be gone for the present, but shall see you shortly. In the mean-

time I have brought, to amuse your solitude, two books; one of them is the early Chronicle of Sweden,* the other the old ballad legends of our native north."

"They are most welcome, my kind sir," said the stranger; "and I shall be glad of your company at your convenience, though I fear that I am a most troublesome lodger. If any one come to your dwelling at night-fall, by the token of his asking for Eric Voss, shalt thou know that he is my friend; and admit him, for his business is urgent."

The sun had sunk placidly—like the benignant eye of heaven—beyond the great hills, whose ragged fringework of larch, pine, and fir, yet glowed in dark outline against the pavilion of the west, while the evening star, peeping from behind a pale grey cloud, heralded the galaxy of night, as a tall youth, wrapt up in his cloak of furs, solicited at the curacy of Suverdsio for leave to warm himself a while by the hearth, ere he proceeded on his farther journey amid the mountains. The Curate was absent, having gone out in the afternoon to visit the mourners at the cottage of old Magnus; nor was his daughter without anxiety for his return. But Margaret made bold to admit the traveller, even though quite alone in the house, and conscious of the distracted state of the

* Probably either Eric of Upsal's "Chorographia Scandinaviae," or Adam of Bremen's "Tumbae Veterum apud Sueones Gothosque Regum."

times; informing him that her father, whom she expected home every minute, would, she was quite sure, make him perfectly welcome.

After the offer of some slight refreshment, which was duly accepted, Margaret, in her usual affable way, began to enter into conversation with the stranger.—And the massacre of Stockholm being still the theme upon every tongue, she inquired if he had recently come, or had heard any thing from that quarter?

" Oh yes," answered the youth; " and bloody work they made of it. But I have come up among the hills in search of an old comrade in arms of mine, one Regner—I forget his name just now."

" Regner Beron, can it be?" asked Margaret, eagerly.

" Ay, that's the name; you have not, I find, forgotten. But let me ask you, Margaret, ——"

" Heavens! is it you, Regner!—Ah, Regner, do I see you once more, safe, safe, safe!" and springing across the floor, she threw herself upon his neck, while he pressed her to his heart in an ecstasy of affection; then, as suddenly withdrawing herself, like a wild bird from the grasp of the truant school-boy, she said to him, while her bosom heaved, and her cheek glowed with the flush of maidenly modesty, which in the irresistible vehemence of her emotions she had somewhat over-exerted—" Oh, fly—fly, Beron! do you not know that the horsemen are in

our dales in search of you—may be even at this moment at our gates—and how could I survive your fate!—But I talk simply; perhaps you have forgotten me?"

"Forgotten you, Margaret!—but you are jesting."

"Nay, nay,—but I am not jesting of your danger. Have you not heard that your protector, Magnus Vere, poor old, white-haired Magnus, has been slain by your pursuers, in their rage at not finding you? Grasp not round for your pistols—alas! it is now too late."

"Impossible!" said Regner, starting to his feet, soul-struck at the intelligence he had received. "Then I swear——"

"Swear not at all, Beron," interrupted Margaret. "The thing is past, and you are blameless. Let your care now be for the living—for yourself."

"Be not dismayed, Margaret, on that score. Well know I these my native hills; and I have a sword-arm to protect my head. Ah, poor Magnus! and hath thy charity paid the penalty of blood! rather had I fallen into the hands of my enemies. How can I repay such loss!"

"His cause was thine," answered Margaret; "and if he has perished at his post, like a loyal Swedish mountaineer, scarcely is his fate to be lamented, seeing the degradation to which the living are subjected. Were I a man, Beron, we should conquer

or fall together! In the meantime, see to yourself, and fly for secure refuge! But whither fly? No—no—remain here. You cannot be safer than with my father; and if perish we must, let our house fall together. Like Saul and Jonathan we have been united in our lives, and in death let us be not divided."

"My dear, kind Margaret," said Beron, seizing the hand she faintly attempted to withdraw, "it must not be so at present. Yet, credit me, matters are not so desperate as your solicitude pictures to your fears. Cheer up, my sweet one, I have undergone many hardships, encountered many dangers, but I have held them all lightly, compared with the simple sorrow of being separated from thee. We have known happy days, Margaret, and may yet.—How grows the hazel by the mill-stream? Does the declining sun never invite you to a saunter there now

"Ah, Beron, do you ask that?" said she, with a sorrowful playfulness. "But whither go you this evening? You must not stir before my father returns."

"I promise you I do not, for I have business with him. Have you no other visiter?"

"Why do you ask?"

"So, Margaret, you are careful not even to open yourself to me? but I applaud your caution. Where have you hidden him?"

"I am a trusty housekeeper, Beron, and divulge not family secrets, so shall not implicitly depend even on you. Could you have thought so, Beron? But how would you judge of me, were my idle openness to endanger any one, who reckoned himself secure in the character of our guest. But, hearken!"

"What do you hear, my faithful Margaret?"

"Yes, 'tis my father's footstep;" and she rose to hurry to the door, when Beron, interposing, snatched a first, fond kiss; and, ere she had breath to chide him, he laid his hand on her arm, saying,

"Stay, Margaret, stay; I too have reasons for privacy, and perhaps even from him; for I journey in the character of a special messenger, and know not yet how his heart stands affected regarding our cause. Fear not, however, Margaret, that I have embarked in any enterprise wherein my honour may be compromised. If we succeed, we reap a harvest of glory; if we fail, it is after having acted the parts of true men. We shall hope the best, Margaret," he added, as she withdrew the hand he affectionately pressed. "The cloudiest day may set in the pure tranquillity of sunshine; and, though unworthy thee, I know thy bosom too faithful to desert that man in peril to whom thou did'st pledge thy troth in peace!"

At this moment the father entering, retreated a step in surprise at seeing a muffled stranger seated by his hearth; not that the thing was uncommon, or

that any traveller of the hills had ever received other than a kind welcome, but because, in the existing troubled state of Dalecarlia, he was in danger of having at the same moment the pursuer and the fugitive under his roof together, well knowing, at the same time—so high ran the spirit of conflicting parties—that should such ever chance to be the case, small would be the scruple of the persecuting Dane, and as small the hesitation of the persecuted Swede, about staining the hearth with human blood.

"Good even, sir," said Beron, rising and bowing respectfully; "I presume you are the Curate of Suverdsio. If so, I bear you a confidential message."

"From whom?" asked the Curate a little anxiously, as Beron, in the act of pushing aside his cloak, to draw a packet from his breast, displayed two pistols stuck in the broad leathern belt which girdled his doublet.

"From whom I may not say," replied Beron; "but to Count Eric Voss bear I my message. Perhaps you may direct me where that nobleman is to be found?"

"And is Eric Voss one of our nobles?" asked the Curate, with not a little surprise, as the unreserved nature of the communications they had held together flashed back upon his memory. "Indeed his stately mien and bearing mark him out as such, and separate him from the common crowd, not less than his learning, sense, and information. I find too, he

has travelled, and knows the world as well from observation as from books. Have you had any refreshment? I shall lead you to him immediately."

"Thanks to your kind daughter," said Beron, giving Margaret a gentle look unobserved by the Curate, "I am abundantly refreshed, and ready to follow you—as I doubt not my presence is anxiously wearied for by the Count, though I am yet an hour earlier than I appointed."

The Curate resumed his hat, and led the way to the door, followed by Regner; while Margaret came up behind with the ostensible purpose of seeing it closed. But, perhaps, she might have some other object equally in view—and what guess you, reader, might that be? Perhaps a parting squeeze of her lover's hand; and in this she was not disappointed.

By sunrise on the succeeding morning, Count Eric Voss, and Regner Beron, departed from the sanctuary of the hospitable Curate, who accompanied them a short way on their route. They made a halt, however, at the small wooden bridge thrown over the river Leissac, about a mile and a half from the church of Suverdsio; and standing beneath the immense trees of pitch-fir, whose dark branches overhung the sharp rocks on the left bank of the stream, they conversed together for a little while on the state and prospects of affairs around them, promising that, either in weal or wo, their host should soon hear of them.

Before parting, the Count unbuttoned the coarse, shaggy cloak in which he was clumsily wrapped, the better to disguise his quality, and cut, with his penknife, a golden button from the curiously embroidered tunic he wore underneath, saying to the Curate, "Money, my kind friend, I have not to offer you, the which I less regret, knowing as I do, that your hospitality flows not from base thirst of lucre, but from pure benevolence to your fellow-creatures. Preserve this button, which I have now cut from the left breast of my tunic. Its intrinsic value is insignificant; but it may serve you as a memorial of one whom you relieved from urgent distress, and set on his path rejoicing. When I came to your hospitable door, but two days ago, my prospects were black as the shade these rocks cast on the water; now they are brightening like yon skies beneath the influence of the rising sun."

"You think of me," said the good man, "much more warmly than my supposed merits claim. Though my holy calling forbids my joining in scenes of warfare, yet the religion I profess blinds not the human conscience to the sense of right and wrong; but commands us to do our duty, and be not afraid. Could I behold the atrocities which have clothed my dear native country in mourning, and bowed down the honest pride of her independence to the dust, yet live on regardlessly in sloth and apathy of mind, believe me it could as little

render me a better minister of the faith, as it could satisfy the demands of my abhorring spirit. I rejoice for your own sakes, and for the sake of this oppressed realm, that you leave my door with better hopes than those with which you approached it. Take with you my parting blessing—my prayers be ever with your noble cause; and, if the day arrive when you unsheathe your swords for our country's freedom, be assured that my heartiest petitions ascend to heaven in your behalf."

"My excellent friend," said the Count, "would that all the sons of Sweden rejoiced in her honour as you do, felt her degradation as you feel, and were actuated by the same open, bold freedom of principles; then would the fetters with which we are bound, be but ropes of the sea-sand, and the iron sceptre with which we are ruled, drop at once from the blasted hand of our oppressor. Then should we soon see our ancient independence restored, and make these accursed Danes feel—what our fathers have often made them feel—that they rouse the slumbering lion when they provoke our resentment."

Having slowly sauntered on during this conversation, they had gained a part of the road on the opposite bank of the stream, where a footpath branched off to a thick part of the old woods at the bottom of a small ravine, one side of which was formed by frightful, almost perpendicular rocks, from the

ledges of which, the scared mountain-birds screamed loudly as they wheeled away over the trees. The spot was wild, sequestered, and lonely, and so little discernible from the main road, that the traveller might readily pass on without its attracting his smallest observation. The three stood still for a moment and listened, but nought was to be heard save the faint far scream of the heaven-ascending eagle, whose gyrations were gradually mingling themselves with the ocean of blue sky. "My friend," said the Count, turning to Beron, "I hope you have not disappointed us?"

"'Tis impossible," was the reply, as, running a little forward, he ascended a green knoll, and gave a short, shrill whistle. For a few moments he stood silently looking around him, and listening for an answer. He then repeated his summons still more loudly, and almost immediately came a response from the adjacent woods, while the Count and the Curate, gazing stedfastly in that direction, had the satisfaction of discovering a peasant, hurriedly leading forward two horses.

The Count then cried to his friend, "I see our squire has been trusty. Give him now what recompense you may; and it were best he loiter in this neighbourhood, till he learns something farther of us."

"Is he good for any thing?" said the Curate, smiling. "We cannot afford to have idle hangers-on

about us; but, if he can work in the field—or about the house—or take care of our cows—or follow our straggling hill-sheep—we shall be glad of his services till you return among us."

"An excellent fellow will you find him," said Beron; "and capable of all that you ask. See that he serve you diligently."

The Count then mounted a beautiful black steed, which, curvetting under his weight, seemed to rejoice in the hopes of travel; while Beron, following his example, lingered for an instant, as he whispered his last injunctions into the ear of the stirrup-holder; then, waving his hand to the Curate, gallopped on after his leader.

In half a minute they were out of sight round the angle of the hill; the road looking far down into the streamy dells beneath; but the poor fellow hurried up to the top of a tall detached piece of rock, to have a last look of the travellers; and, having gazed a little, gave his hand a farewell wave, as he came plodding down to the spot where the Curate stood.

"Gunnar shall maybe never see his master more," he said, giving his head a sorrowful shake; "it were better to be with the thunder-storms among the summer hills, when every flash of lightning shivers the old pines, than to go to the field of battle, where human blood flows like the waters of the stream. My blessings, however, go with him; for a kinder heart beats not between this and the sea."

"So your name is Gunnar," said the Curate, as they quietly bent their steps homeward to Suverdsio. "You are not, sure, a native of these parts? for few in our district are unknown to me."

"Right, master," replied the peasant, "such is my name; but, though I seem a stranger to you, not many miles from where we now are, was I born and bred. To be sure, having long worked in the mines —that is for ten years; and being now six-and-twenty, come Yule—I know not a great many folks above ground. However, I have been at Suverdsee before now; and the prettiest lass in all wide Sweden is to be found in that spot, and no where else."

"Indeed, Gunnar!" said the Curate, a little amused. "And so you are in love, are you?"

"I shall not say I am not," quoth the honest fellow; "but we must not think of these things just at the present, when we are all about to become soldiers, and scour the country with pike and pistol. I see you are acquainted with our general, and I doubt not will be up and fighting with the best of us. Is it long since you joined our party?"

"So you don't know me?" asked the Curate.

"No," answered Gunnar; "unless you be that Gustavus Vasa, they have made such an ado about; but I should guess him scarcely yet come to your years, though you look hale and healthy, sir."

"Indeed, honest Gunnar, you honour me, I should

suppose, much by your mistake; but I am no more than the poor Curate of Suverdsio."

"The Curate! Bless my heart! Oh, pardon, sir, my stupid blunders," said Gunnar, making an awkward leg, as he lifted his bonnet. "If you are that man I shall stay with you,—and work for you, —and fight for you, while I have an arm to lift; and all for your kindness to Katherine Vere, my own sweet maiden."

"Oh, ho!" cried the Curate; "and does the scent of the chase lie that way, Gunnar. Have you not heard that Katherine has lost her father?"

"Yes I have," answered Gunnar, swinging the large stick in his hand around his head with brawny strength; "and, had we come within arms length—the dastardly thieves, and this staff—I should have bid them defiance, glancing swords and all. Cowardly rascals! to murder a man whose hairs were grown white before their mothers suckled them."

"Shameful, indeed," said the Curate, "and unworthy the name of men. Heaven grant, for the sake of humanity, that, as they have dealt to others, they be not yet dealt with."

"Never mind, sir; it is over now, but we will make them smart for it yet, I'll warrant us. They think they have us as the cat has the mouse; but oh ho—wait a little—wait a little; the general has got a list from my master last night, which will make his blood flow joyfully."

"Indeed," said the Curate, pleased at the simple loquacity of Gunnar. "Where come they from?"

"From the four quarters of the wind," was the reply. "But you have been at the Fair of Mora?" added Gunnar.

"Many times," said the Curate.

"And forget ye," answered Gunnar, "that of all days of the year this chances to be the one on which it is held. He has but to appear and blow his bugle-horn in the crowd; and the great mob there shall be changed in a twinkling from traffickers into soldiers; and the staves be thrown from the hands to be exchanged for swords hidden under the doublets."

"Wo, wo unto the Danes," said the Curate, imbibing a portion of the honest fellows enthusiasm, "when the flag of our defiance curls in the breeze!"

"Thou hast said it, my master; but hark ye."

"What is it that stirs you so much, friend Gunnar?"

"Why, who can think of what will be shortly going on, sir, without feeling the blood tingling in his veins," said the peasant, grasping his cudgel. "Rare shall be the work; it is scarcely fair leaving me here only to hear of it. That is the reason why the Count and our master spur on so gallantly. Guess ye whom they expect to meet there?"

"Probably," answered the Curate, "to meet the friends who, you have just said, have pledged themselves to take up arms."

"You have guessed aright," replied Gunnar, but only in part, master. Hollo, hollo," cried he, dancing and skipping about, "when the bell tolls twelve, then—then—then the blast will be blown, and the pass-word given, that will bring a thousand swords from their scabbards; and make the frightened Danes scud from the streets like the hare, when the greyhound yells at her heels. And who think ye is to blow the blast?—and who think ye is to give the pass-word? My master? No—no—no. The Count? No—no—no. The blood of a hero warms his heart—the blood of kings runs in his veins;—it is the nephew of the Administrator,—it is the grandson of King Canutson,—it is Gustavus Vasa!".

"Gustavus Vasa!" cried the Curate, almost as overjoyed as Gunnar; "then we shall play the game manfully. Can it be possible," added he, laying his hand a moment on the peasant's arm, in surprise and pleasure—"or are you jesting with me?"

"Jesting!" replied Gunnar; "think of the murder of old Magnus, and judge if jesting would suit such a subject. No! 'tis as true as that sun is now shining,—as these clouds are now sailing over us,—as that stream is now flowing,—and as the God, who must judge all, is just."

The rising at Mora, a populous parish of the mountain district of Dalecarlia took place, according to

the Chronicles of Sweden, in the year fifteen hundred and twenty. It was there that the first signal of that revolution was madé, which, after a glorious struggle, terminated in the restoration of the Swedish people to their ancestral independence.

At this era, Gustavus Vasa—the Wallace of Sweden—was a young man in the thirtieth year of his age; but he had already seen much service in the profession of arms, both at home and abroad, having advanced himself by his heroic conduct, more especially at the battle of the castle of Wedel, to the rank of general of horse; disdaining, like others of the young nobles, to nurse himself on the lap of indulgence, or give himself up to the syren sway of luxurious pleasure. As already mentioned, his family was among the most ancient and exalted in the country, having descended from blood-royal, and being hereditary Great Standard-bearers of the kingdom.

It would appear that, at very tender years, he exhibited signs of that masculine genius which afterwards so greatly distinguished him; for he was sent over by his father, Eric Vasa, the Governor of Finland, to the care of his uncle, the Administrator, with particular instructions regarding his studies at the University of Upsal, whither he was sent.

It is not our purpose here—indeed it would be quite foreign to the elucidation of our little tale—to say more of him, than that, after the massacre of

Stockholm, in which his father perished, together with many of his friends, he vowed the vow of attempting the rescue of Sweden from foreign oppression, and, if possible, breaking at once the bonds of civil and religious tyranny. But the craftiness of political guilt smelt out the danger, even when afar off; for the fame of his early prowess had already reached the ears of Christiern, who not only entered his name in the list of the proscribed, but set a price on his head.

We can merely glance at a few of the romantic exploits through which this act of tyranny compelled him to pass. In the disguise of a peasant he fled from the scene of devastation, accompanied by a single attendant, who, after robbing him of almost every thing, absconded, and was no more heard of; while Christiern, finding that his prey had eluded him, seized on the mother and sister of Gustavus, and carrying them away by sea, had them thrown into a Danish prison.

Notwithstanding the strong family affection of Gustavus, even the threatened destruction of those dearest to his heart did not induce him to surrender himself; and he allowed his actions to be governed by the principles of public duty. Having wandered over the whole country of Sudermania, he passed between Westmania and Nericia, encountering fatigues, and undergoing privations, under which a less fervid enthusiasm must have cooled, and a less

robust frame sunk; until, reaching the safer mountains of Dalecarlia, he sheltered in that district of the province which is called Daalfield. After wandering about for some time in poverty and wretchedness, with discomfited hopes, and a wearing out frame, living on the chance bounty of nature, and sleeping on the green turf under the forest trees, he was at length driven to shew himself among men, and ventured to hire himself as a labourer in the mines; where he lay buried under ground, working for a pitiful subsistence. But even here he was not secure; nor was the wretchedness of his condition able to conceal his real estate; for the old woman at whose hovel he lodged, finding the fragment of a silken gold-embroidered robe among his clothes, carried it to the lord of the land, who chancing to have been educated at the university of Upsal along with him, recognised the nephew of the Administrator of the kingdom even in his rags.

Such, however, was the fascination of Gustavus, and the power of his enthusiasm in the cause of religion and liberty, that instead of being delivered up, he induced his discoverer to enter into his schemes, and was offered the accommodation of his princely mansion. His proselyte engaged to raise his kindred, who were many and powerful, whenever opportunity occurred, against the tyranny of Denmark; but he appears to have been one of "the infirm of purpose;" for he shortly became terror-

struck at the designs he had agreed to adopt; and, when prospects of active warfare opened up, his "heart of hare" died within him, and he slunk away like a timid ermine to the security of his hiding-place.

To the dishonour of Sweden but too many were found of like temper;—but not so was Gustavus. Disdaining to owe protection to such a dastardly knave, he set out alone, and, at midnight, through the woods to the abode of Arnold Peterson, an officer whom he had known in the army, and who had made him the most unbounded professions of friendship. Peterson received him as he expected—entered instantly into his plans—and told him that he had been only waiting a signal to raise up his adherents in arms; but, like the heathen deity Janus, he was double-faced; and, while he was exhibiting the outward shew of a Pythias, his treacherous heart prompted him to follow in the footsteps of Judas.

Having calmed the unsuspecting heroic mind of Gustavus, by representing that every thing was in proper training, he went straight to one of the military rulers of the Danish tyrant, and informed him that he had caged the long-sought for wild bird of the woods—that he had the fugitive under his own roof! But the pity, the gentle sympathy of woman's heart preserved him from destruction; for even at the moment Peterson was leading a band of armed horsemen to surround his dwelling, and cut off every

avenue of escape, his wife Meretta, seized, according to some, with a sudden passion for her handsome guest, or instigated, according to others, solely by commiseration with his misfortunes, warned him of his danger, and despatched a trusty servant with him through the woods, till he was safe from the search, and beyond the pursuit of his enemies.

From his escape from the treachery of Peterson, till the period where our tale again takes him up at the Fair of Mora, among the Dalecarlian hills, his adventures had been involved in obscurity; so we shall proceed in the thread of our little narrative, which required this brief elucidation, as it involves events connected with that revolution which was afterwards effected.

At the fair of Mora, where he appears to have been joined by Count Eric Voss, and many other persons of note, he succeeded effectually in exciting into action the dormant patriotism of his native land; and scarcely had he raised the standard of insurrection, when he found himself at the head of a considerable force, whose enthusiasm in the cause of independence, and hatred against the Danish oppression, he did not allow to cool by inaction, but led them against the castle of the foreign governor, which he took by storm. Success augmenting his army —which he strove to discipline—he proceeded impetuously on in his career; and being joined by Olai, Laurence Erici, Fredage, and Jonas de Nederby,

gentlemen who had been outlawed by Christiern, he fearlessly offered battle to the army of the Viceroy, who wisely declined it, and invested the town of Westeras, which he forced to capitulate.

Many of the recreant nobility, stimulated by his successes to a sense of duty, rose up in different parts of the country; so that, by ramifying his designs, Gustavus was enabled to carry on several different enterprises at the same time; while, almost without giving his enemies time to recover from their panic, he traversed, with amazing celerity, the provinces of Helsingland, Medelpadia, Angermania, Gestricia, and Bothnia, causing them all to revolt; while, securing the mountain passes against the march of the Danes, and portioning out his army among proper officers, he caused Arwide to over-run Ostrogothland, and made Laurence Petri besiege the town of Nincoping; Olaus Bond investing the capital of Nericia, and Olai and Erici, the city of Upsal on both sides.

In an inconceivably short time, he found himself master of one-half of Sweden, so powerfully had his enthusiasm, and the terror of his prowess co-operated to discomfit the Danes. But, with the exasperated passions of disappointed ambition, Christiern, like a true savage, caused the mother and sister of the patriot, whom he had carried away into captivity, in contempt of all laws human and divine, to be wrapped up in sacks, and thrown into the sea.

The young hero was for a while soul-struck and overcome with the affliction of this terrible catastrophe; but, re-mustering those energies which the barbarian cruelty of Christiern was no doubt intended to paralyse, he soon shewed that it had awakened a totally different feeling in his bosom; for, actuated by a spirit of righteous retaliation, he issued a proclamation, commanding all the Danes, wherever they could be found, to be put to the sword without mercy—a proceeding against which his calmer mind might indeed well revolt, but one which the urgency of circumstances in a manner rendered necessary. That he was right in his calculation speedily shewed itself; for not only had it the effect of dismaying his opponents, but it also elevated the spirits of his adherents in a corresponding ratio—as it evinced the absence of all fear about being ever compelled to submit to terms, and shewed that he held in contempt both the friendship and the opposition of those who had so long ruled Sweden with a rod of iron.

Amid the tempest of these commotions, it so happened, that while sunshine was dispelling the night of slavery, the glorious doctrines of the immortal Luther sprung up conquering and to conquer the gloomy, debasing, and detestable superstition of the Roman Church. Among those who, in Sweden, were most forward in advancing the tenets of the Christian faith, pure, holy, and undefiled, and in

tearing away the bandage from the eyes of the too-long-blinded multitude, were two brothers, Laurence and Olaus Petri, the former one of the bravest among the generals of Gustavus, the latter the Canon of Stregnez, a man of parts and eloquence, combining the accomplishments of the scholar with the fearlessness of the soldier. With indignation Gustavus himself had long beheld the paltry arts and subterfuges which were taken to hoodwink the understandings of the people, and only waited a favourable opportunity for trampling on the supremacy of the Pope, and professing the Protestant religion. To his regret, however, matters were not found ripe enough, till after the lapse of several years, for an open declaration of his espousal of the reformation of Luther; but whenever state policy rendered this step safe, he at once exhibited his sincerity by an unshrinking public avowal.

In vain did the Viceroy and the Danish leaders gain any temporary advantage over him, for his checks seemed to be complete but for the moment; and, like the fabled giant, whose strength was renewed every time he touched the ground, his efforts appeared always more vigorous and fearful after any casual disaster. At length, having succeeded triumphantly in ascending the hill of his difficulties, and gaining that pinnacle where the sun of glory shone cloudlessly above his head, he felt that the bonds of Danish thraldom might be soon irretrievably broken

asunder, and that Christiern might, instead of being the pursuer, become the pursued. The undisciplined peasantry he had trained into a formidable body. Causing them to lay aside the customary use of the cross-bow, he exercised them in the employment of fire-arms, so that they were in a short time little inferior to the most veteran troops of Europe. By many wise and salutary regulations, order was restored to a realm which had long groaned under the turbulence of faction; and the commerce, which oppression had so powerfully tended to annihilate, rapidly began to revive under more favourable auspices. From the most abject degradation, the unconquerable heroism, and sage legislation of Gustavus, had raised his native land to its ancient dignity and freedom. He had settled it in peace, in security, and power; and freed it from all invaders. Nor is it at all to be wondered at, when we consider the misery Sweden had suffered under viceroys, usurpers, archbishops, and military commandants, that the voice of the people, as the only fit monument of national gratitude, should have placed the sceptre in that hand which had wielded the sword so successfully for them, and so gloriously for itself.

Having now, on the historical chart, looked sufficiently before and after us to render our narrative perspicuous, we shall again go back to our story, leaving affairs of state to those that were engaged in

them, and return once more to the village of Suverdsio, and our old friend the Curate.

Sharp were the winds and piercing, and the clouds showered snows over the fading hills, when Count Eric Voss, and his trusty attendant Regner Beron, hastened from the cottages of Suverdsio, to join Gustavus at the first great insurrection, which was appointed for the Fair of Mora;—and now the tints of autumn were again pervading the woods, the acorn fell from the oak, the pine tree began to drop its leaves, and the fir shook down its dark cones upon the moist turf; while the skies waned like the lower world, and amid the shortening days, the shorn grain disappeared from the plains into the granary of the farmer. It was in this season of melancholy fruitfulness, that the Curate, while amusing a vacant afternoon in pruning some creeping acacias that greened over the front of his secluded dwelling, paused to behold a company of horsemen, whose arms glittered in the flood of mellow sunlight, approaching on the steep road which formed the southern approach; some riding before, and some behind a caleche, or little carriage, drawn by four horses.—In the multitude of his thoughts within him, his mind could not otherwise feel than somewhat perplexed at the unexpected unfolding of a spectacle so uncommon among his old, native hills; and, when we consider the irritated and unsettled state of the country at this juncture, and the consciousness of

the Curate that his actions might be tortured to his ruin, the momentary qualm which came over him will not form a ninth wonder of the world. Of battles fought, and battles won, much had he heard; but, from the conflicting state of party opinion, little worthy of reliance, in those days when newspapers were not, could be gleaned from any quarter. So though he still inclined to hope, in the absence of all positive information, that success was still attendant on the patriotic efforts, yet his nerves received a shock, when, on the nearer approach of the cavalcade, he perceived that the soldiers were in light green uniform, and wore in their caps the badge of King Christiern. He immediately supposed, on second thoughts, that the vehicle was the travelling conveyance of some of the Danish nobility; and that they were probably attempting their escape from Sweden, under the protection of an armed band; but his dismay was renewed, when, on the carriage halting at his gate, he observed that it was quite empty. The leader of the party, dismounting from his horse, first assured himself that he addressed the Curate of Suverdsio, and then informed him that he had orders for carrying away him and his daughter as prisoners; while he acknowledged that he had positive commands to treat both with every leniency, which interfered not with their chance of escape.

"What may I have done," asked the Curate,

"to bring upon me the so much marked attention of your government? Can I be informed, sir?"

"Oh," replied the commandant, "as to that, it is not my province to inquire. The soldier does the bidding of his sovereign; and the civil laws of the kingdom take cognizance of right and wrong. That is a subject on which it is not my duty, neither have I ability to enter."

"Well, since it is so," said the Curate, "let the righteous will of heaven be done!—For myself I care little—comparatively nothing. What I have said, I have said as conscience, the oracle of the soul, dictated;—what I have done, I have done as my strict duty to God and my fellow-creatures dictated. But my daughter—oh, my daughter!—let not what she knew nothing of—knows nothing of—bring down a punishment she deserves not. Take me—take me! I am ready—willing to go with you; but, as you have wives, as you have daughters, spare her—and let her remain behind!—Whither am I to be carried?"

"Our orders command your being carried to the Castle of Westeras, the palace of the Viceroy; where a Council of State sit, giving trial, and awarding just sentences to such as have rebelled against the just government, or despised the edicts of the King. In this thing, it causes me regret that I may not attend to you, being positively enjoined to bring your daughter along with you, and

with all due speed, to the appointed place of examination; the court being about to remove, for a like purpose, to a more remote part of the country."

"Are your orders then so positive?" asked the Curate, sorrowfully.

"Imperative,—and I trust you will immediately see the duty of submitting voluntarily, and without hesitation, knowing that resistance would be madness, and that escape is out of the question."

"Well then, I submit freely," said the Curate, fervently clasping his palms for a moment together, and looking upwards to the place whence comes the aid of the righteous. "You observe my anxiety," he said; "but take it not for the anxiety of fear. I have done only what I would do over again; and, fearing One above, I have no human fear. But as you are a man, oh, spare my daughter! I am a child when the dream of her misery comes across me; and when I think that, in my supposed guilt, the perfectly guiltless may suffer. What I have done pertains to me alone,—she hath aided not—or aided only in ignorance, in submission to a parent's authority. I am ready and willing to answer for my conduct; but load me not with crime in involving her in danger; and if guilt can be imputed to me in aught I have done, let not its weight fall upon one who is innocent as the babe unborn!"

By this time, Margaret, at first surprised at the unwonted approach of such a cavalcade, had her sur-

prise changed into terror at perceiving the Danish uniform. She beheld, from the window, the expostulating attitudes of her father; and, on coming to the threshold, she heard the broken and elevated tones of his voice.

At once the whole truth flashed upon her soul; and, rushing forward, she threw her arms around his beloved neck. "He must not go," she cried. "Oh, no, you shall not take him from me!—I know—yes, yes, I know well what you have done to others, and would do to him!" she screamed in an agony of affection and fear;—"but where my father goes, nothing shall hinder my going also; and whatever his fate is, so shall be mine;—that surely you will not refuse—that, if you are men, you surely dare not refuse; else the evil spirits that are said to infest the world, have not ascribed to them actions of more unsparing cruelty!"

"My sweet young lady," said the commandant, in as soothing a tone as his military habits could be supposed to assume, "do compose yourself. You shall go with your father as you desire; and I pledge my honour on this sword, that, while you are in my keeping, no harm shall be allowed to happen either."

Upon entering into the house, at the request of the Curate, while preparations were made, as could best be made, for their immediate journey, the commandant explained at length the imperative orders

he had received to bring both father and daughter along with him; begging of him not to repeat requests that his public duty left him not at liberty to comply with, however repugnant that duty might be to his private feelings.

With heavy hearts, although nerved with the fortitude which only conscious virtue can bestow, the Curate and his daughter in a short time declared themselves in readiness to accompany their captors; while Katherine Vere, a girl in the beauty of eighteen, scarcely less fair than her fair mistress, wiping her eyes with her white apron, and weeping half aloud, saw the hearth, by which she had often sat singing in joy, extinguished, and the doors of hospitality locked, making, what had once been a home of cheerful peace, the house of desolation.

At the door of the vehicle her master shook hands with her cordially, bidding Heaven bless and protect her; and Margaret, as she leant forward to give her a parting kiss, said, in a voice whose tremulous accents belied her smiles, "Keep a cheerful heart, Katherine, we will be back to you ere long."

The cavalcade immediately proceeded, Katherine following it greedily with her eyes, now and then looking back at the deserted vicarage, and again forward at the rapidly disappearing horsemen, as, solitary and sighing, she sauntered homewards to the cottage of her widowed mother. In her hand she carried a cage, containing the linnet which had, with its clear,

shrill, happy pipe, so often enlivened the tasks of her young mistress; gazing at every tree and rock as she passed along, as if fate had forewarned her that she was never to traverse the same road again. Having gained a height, from which the view of the downward country was distinct and extensive, she sat down on a fragment of rock, and watched for a long time the horsemen and the carriage, as they gradually disappeared, lessening on the sight; now losing themselves amid the sylvan scenery, and now for a while exposed again to view by a casual elevation, or a winding of the road.

The sun, looking down from his azure pavilion, tinged the fleecy clouds, that seemed only to linger in the ether from the delight of being kissed by the effulgence of his purple glory, and scattered a boundless flush of mellow irradiation over the splendid scenery of the mountainous district. The decaying tints of the illimitable forests, clothing the steep hills even to their rugged precipices—the mournful murmurs of the swoln streamlets—the solitary whirr of the startled wild bird—and the seeding plants by the way-side, served to embalm with a pleasing sweetness the melancholy of her thoughts—for melancholy indeed were the thoughts that haunted and hung over her. She had seen the home, wherein she had spent years of happy days, shuttered and locked up, and the benefactors who had watched over, protected her, and loved her

as one of their own kindred, dragged away by enemies, who had hitherto shewn no remorse for their atrocities,—evincing neither sympathy for the weak, nor pity for the fair,—to captivity assuredly, and in all probability to immediate trial and condemnation. Oh, lonely was the lot of Katherine; and amid the scenes of loneliness, the desolation of her situation fell with a gloomier shadow over her heart. Like the declining sun, her prospects had suffered a sorrowful eclipse; and, as she journeyed with pensive steps across the hill-side to the cottage of her mother, the night-hawk, wheeling with ominous wing through the dusky twilight, uttered its quick, wild, unearthly cry; and the dash of the waterfall, echoing through the forest silence, spake of despondency, and desertion, and solitude.

But who is that watching his mountain-flock?—Is it some timorous wanderer of the hills—some marked victim of the Dane? Hah, 'tis Gunnar!—'tis our old chum Gunnar himself—large as life, and overflowing to the lips with joy at the sudden apparition of his Dulcinea del Suverdsio. But we must allow them to walk home together; and leave sorrow to its best and sweetest alleviation—the commingling of affectionate hearts.

After a journey of two days, during which every attention was paid to the wants and wishes of the Curate and his daughter consistent with their security, the commandant arrived with his charge at

the hamlet of Waddersteine, about half-a-mile from the Castle of Westeras, where the Danish assembly were then sitting.

To his inquiries during their route, the commandant ventured to give the Curate only scanty glimpses into the state of affairs; but this much he could learn, that several battles had been fought with various success; that several towns had fallen into the hands of the Swedish revolutionists; and that Stockholm, the capital of the country, still held out for the Dane. Scarcely could these reports be inspiriting to our friend the Curate; for, previous to the fatal day on which he had fallen into the hands of his enemies, his enthusiasm had caused him to lend too ready an ear to the rumours, that the sword of Gustavus was like a sun-burst, which flashed over the land, chasing before it the gloom of superstition, and the night of slavery. What a miserable shock had his expectations received, in finding the arm of the Dane still sufficient to reach him in his remote and sequestered mountain home! Yet, grieving as he did for the misfortunes he had brought on a loving and beloved daughter, he did not allow selfishness entirely to swallow up and annihilate the interest he had taken in the fortunes of his native country. His hopes in her behalf, appeared indeed blasted and desolate,—some sudden reverse, previously altogether unsuspected by him, appeared at once to have trampled down the patriotic insur-

gents to the dust; and the light, which had commenced to dawn so gloriously over hill and dale, had set in a night of clouds, without any twilight forewarning.

It was now evening—and the commandant, who, in the afternoon, had left his charge under sufficient guard, returned to escort the captive mountaineers to the great assembly, already meeting or met for their trial. To the interrogatories of the Curate, he returned no satisfactory answer, re-mentioning his injunctions of secrecy; but he ventured to express the hope, that things might yet turn out more favourably than was anticipated.

When the father, dressed out in his best sables, and the daughter in a white robe as pure as her innocent heart, lingered a moment at the door for the drawing up of the carriage, far-borne through the silence of evening, came, like a sepulchral voice, the toll of the great bell, summoning them forward to the hall of trial.

Halting by an immense arched gateway, they passed through the vestibule of a building, whose quadrangular turrets seemed to support the weight of the lowering sky. Neither of the two had ever known more of the palaces of the great than what the apocryphal testimony of books had conveyed to them, so that on being ushered by folding doors, of a sudden, into the very heart of the hall of assembly, it was no wonder their eyes were dazzled, and their

hearts died within them. The stupendous vaulted roofs, covered with grotesque paintings, and an infinitude of stuccoed imagery, the tall gothic 'diced windows with their magnificent traceries, the walls groaning under their load of gorgeously embroidered tapestry of Arras, the curiously carved benches, the velvet cushions, the marble floors, and the flaming cressets that depended from on high by silken cords, struck on their bewildered imaginations like the visions of some fancifully distempered dream, as for a little they felt themselves as it were in the enchanted habitations of the eastern genii, of whom romancers had written;—and it was some time before they perceived, or at least regarded before them the large assembly of nobles and leaders, some in their rich costly robes, and others in coats of glittering armour.

With the greensward under his feet, the rocks scowling, the trees flourishing, and the mountain winds whistling around him, the Curate could think like a man, and feel as a patriot; but in the midst of such a dazzling assemblage, his spirit drooped, like a caged bird, and he dwindled away in the overwhelming consciousness of his own insignificance. Conviction might, or might not follow; but he had reckoned on at least making a defence which should neither be derogatory to his character as a Swede, nor his faith as a Christian. When put to the trial, however, he now felt that he might as

well be at once led out to death, as to attempt in such a scene any defence of his conduct. As the stars in their beauty look as if they could brave the daylight, yet are swallowed up on the uprise of the effulgent sun, so his many noble emotions, the vigorous arguments, which his reason had suggested, the open manifestation of virtue, which he was sure his conduct must display, even to the eyes of his traducers—all, all vanished before the talisman of magnificence; and he gave up every thing for lost; but, at that desponding moment, he was startled by the touch of something from behind; and, turning his head half round, he discovered Margaret, who gathering hold of the skirt of his coat, had shrunk to his back, and with a blood-forsaken cheek, pale as the white lily of April, seemed ready to sink down on the floor. Then, as by force of magic, "the bowstring of his spirit" regained its elasticity, and the free blood of undaunted manhood came gushing back into his veins;—for nature is superior to art, and the strength of paternal affection deeper rooted in the soul than awe for power, or bedazzling pageantry. He beheld the being more dear to him, for her own sake, and for her mother's, than all other breathing things, clinging to him in the hour of tempest—as the ivy clings to the oak,—and the strong sense of the duty he owed himself and her came to his support.

When he had reached the area in front of the

judges, one from the centre stood up and addressed him, saying—"Are you the Curate of Suverdsio?"—and, in a firm voice, he replied, "I trust, my lord, I have done nothing to make me ashamed to say I am."

Margaret was now offered a chair, by the side of her father; and the interest that her youth and beauty had excited in the court was visible on every countenance; but alas justice is blind, and the scales are allowed not to be freighted with the load of pity.

"We shall see that immediately," said the spokesman of the assembly, in reference to the Curate's answer. "Meanwhile let me ask you this simple question—Do you confess, or do you not, having harboured sundry of the rebellious subjects of King Christiern, when your allegiance bound you to deliver them up to justice, knowing them to be outlawed for their rebellion against his supreme authority, or for their personal crimes?"

"That I have given shelter to my countrymen, when travelling among the hills they required rest and refreshment, I do not deny—even to this time backwards for the last thirty years have I done so. If my word is gainsayed, let the traveller, that hath been refused admittance at my gate, be brought forward to testify against me. Had I withdrawn from the call of the wayfarer in these troublous latter days, I might, I confess readily have been

enabled to repose on my pillow in greater security; but strong was the voice of nature within me; and the duties of that religion, which it is my glory to profess, compelled me to feed the hungry, and to clothe the naked."

"Do you deny the authority of King Christiern?" asked the president.

"Before I answer that question," said the Curate, seeing the dangerous turn that things were about to take, "methinks it were more consonant with the established law of nations to produce my accuser. You cannot surely wish to extort confessions which may ruin me, from my own lips.—But before we proceed farther, my lords, let me implore you to send back this girl, who is my only daughter, to her native hills. It must have been through error, that she has been summoned here, she being a simple maiden, who knows nothing of the ways of the great world, and who has had no other object or delight in life, than in rendering my declining years comfortable, or in visiting the orphan and the widow in their afflictions. If your hearts allow you to listen to the prayers of a distressed fellow mortal, send her home; put her out of this danger, for she is blameless;—and whether accused or without accuser I will freely tell all, wherever my confessions may lead me; though it be from this hall to the scaffold!"

"No father," cried Margaret, springing from her

seat, her recollections seeming to come back at the allusions to her own situation; "I must not—dare not—shall not leave you. Shall it be said of me, that I fled from my father in the hour of distress. Shall the finger of scorn be pointed at me! Shall the good mock me and say, 'behold the woman that has a heart of rock!'—No—no—father 'tis in vain. Whatever you are doomed to suffer, none on earth shall prevent my sharing!"

"Hush—hush, silly girl" said the distracted father, stemming the torrent of her affectionate eloquence. "Speak not in that rash manner—you know not what you are saying." Then, turning to the court, he continued more aloud,—"Justice, my lords, denies that you have the power of extorting confessions from me; especially when confessions of any sort may be tortured into treason, and may end in the spilling of my blood. I stand before you ready to abide your doom; let him then, who hath ought to say against me be brought before me, face to face."

"Assuredly," replied the judge; "your request is most reasonable, and can be momentarily complied with." Then striking his rod on a large bell, which hung suspended from the ceiling, he ordered to be summoned into presence "the Count Regner Beron."

The Curate looked as if he had heard the knell of doom rung in his ears; and Margaret—but we shall not attempt to describe her sensations.

"Regner Beron!" at length cried the Curate,

starting back pale and faltering. The same syllables died on the lips of Margaret. The cloud of despair settled down upon them.

A side door being opened by the attendant officers, a person in a rich dress, proceeded forward to the end of the council table, confronting that where the Curate and his daughter stood; while, as surely as the sun sheds the light of day, they perceived that it was no other than Regner Beron.

"For a moment halt," cried the Curate, recovering himself, and calling in the whole vigour of his soul to brave a fate, which he now saw unavoidable. "For a moment halt,—and allow not that man to bow down his soul with a greater load of perdition. —Regner! attend to me. I knew thee once poor,—the sole relic of an honourable house,—and I hear thee this night addressed by the title of count. Better had it been for thee, to have been earning thy bread by the sweat of thy brow, like the lowest miner on our native Dalecarlian hills, than to stand in this assembly, arrayed in purple and fine linen, as the betrayer of thy country."

"Halt, halt," said the judge; "know ye not that you are speaking treason?"

"Perhaps I may," replied the Curate, dauntlessly; "perhaps it may sound so to the ears of men; but before heaven I am speaking truth!"

"He asks not gold," said the judge; "but we

have promised him your daughter as a reward for his services to the state?"

"My daughter! my pure child Margaret, to become the mate of a perjured renegade! the earth would sicken at such an union. In the nature of things it is monstrous, it is impossible! and heaven with its lightnings would either strike dead the offerer of such profane violence, or summon from a world of sin and wo the spirit of its own, against which the powers of evil expected to triumph!—Ah, Regner, Regner, dare lift up your eyes and look on me. Happier had it been for thee, both in this world and that which is to come, hadst thou contented thyself with thy sequestered home, and continued a hunter of the roebuck on the hills. Thou hast bartered thy peace for gold, thy conscience for a jewelled robe; but think on thy injured country and tremble; remember Judas, and look to thy latter end. Remorse shall haunt thee as a spectre; and the array of thine evil deeds pass before thy visions of the night, rendering existence bitter as the waters of Marah, and recollection the torments of those who have gone down to the pit!"

So fervent was the Curate in his admonitions to Beron, and so absorbed in his subject, that for a little the court seemed to vanish from his eyes; and, looking round to sooth his fainting child, he was about to re-commence his address to the assembly, when, to his surprise, on looking up to the judgment bench,

he observed the chair of the president empty. A few seconds after he however resumed his seat, having put on the black silk robe in which it is customary to pass sentence.

"It is needless," said the president, rising to address the Assembly, "to waste the time of this court by a further examination of the case before us. The witnesses have already given their evidence before you; and, so convincing are the proofs, that you perceive the reverend gentleman has not a single word to say in his own defence. From his own lips indeed he is condemned, as you have this night heard him utter treasons, and pronounce the lawful evidence of the witnesses against him a betrayal of his infatuated country. You have heard how he has been in open rebellion against King Christiern, in word and deed, having openly preached insubordination, and having aided and abetted in the escape of outlaws, whom it behoved him to deliver up to justice. More especially, my lords, it becomes us to remember, that he harboured under his roof that arch-rebel the Count Eric Voss, and was the principal means of his not falling into the hands of his pursuers, when a price was set upon his head, and when, so strong was the scent of his track, that he could not otherwise have escaped. Recollect, my lords, that, had his capture at that moment been effected, the bloodshed of this awful rebellion might have probably been averted.

"Of these facts, and more especially of the latter, there can be no doubt, as the Count's then Esquire, Regner Beron, hath this day borne testimony before us, in a manner at once explicit and incontrovertible.

"Of his daughter, the young lady now before you, it hath also been clearly proved, that she aided and abetted her father in the same course of treasonable proceeding, by carrying food and other necessaries, to the church, wherein the said Count lay concealed.

"But not only, my lords, has the Curate been convicted of treason against the state, but he has trampled under foot the authority of Mother Church, by open laudations and commendations of the conduct of Luther the German heretic, whose damnable tenets he hath exhibited a strong frowardness to adopt.

"As there can be no division of opinion on such a case, I shall now, my lords, proceed to decree judgment in your name."

After whispering for a few seconds with the nobles more immediately around him, and gathering, as it were, their various opinions on the sentence to be pronounced, he advanced to the centre of the hall, where the Curate and his daughter were now standing up,—the one thoughtful, yet calm and resigned, as if he cared less for his own fate than the misery he was about to entail on her; the other

pale and languidly beautiful, like a flower that has been vainly contending with the strong wing of the tempest, her bright black eyes cast despondingly on the floor, her hands clasped together and hanging down before her, her bosom heaving slowly and oppressedly, as if a cumbrous load weighed upon her heart, and her lips apart, as if her spirit fainted for lack of free air.

"Curate of Suverdsio," said the judge, "out of respect to the memory of Count Eric Voss, that mistaken nobleman who hath already reaped the harvest due to his crimes, I am commissioned by my brother judges to inform you, that the Count requested, in the event of your ever being taken, our asking the production of a gold button, which he gave you as a token of remembrance; and that, if you could shew it, we should deal more mercifully with you, for the sake of one who had seen the end of his folly. Rememberest thou aught of such a thing?"

"It is here—it is here!" cried Margaret, startled from her Niobe-like reverie, by this unexpected glimpse of sunshine breaking through the hitherto impenetrable cloud of her father's misfortunes; and producing from her breast a button, which she held up between her finger and thumb.

"Indeed!" said the judge, "this is an unexpected circumstance, and will go some way to alter the features of the business; but let me see if it be

the real one," he added, throwing off his gown, and applying the button, which he had snatched from Margaret's hand, to a vacancy on the triple row which ornamented his own tunic.

The Curate started back in astonishment. "It is he,—it is he himself!" cried the daughter. "It is Count Eric Voss; it is the Count! Stand away, stand away, father; and let me throw myself at his feet!" and so saying, she rushed suddenly forward, and throwing herself down on the floor, seized hold of the under hem of his garment.

"This must not—cannot be," said the Count. "Come hither Beron; and, since you have had the audacity to appear this day as a witness against those who hospitably received us both, you must make atonement to the injured feelings of a father, by thus taking from me the hand of his much-loved child. Her heart is already pledged; and she dares not say me nay. Henceforth regard her as your own. The castle of Othorstone hath as yet no mistress,—let this day that deficiency be supplied."

"No, no," cried Margaret, springing to her feet, and half bewildered in the perplexity of her feelings. "If he be not a true Swede, though he were the Emperor of Allemaine, he should be no husband of mine!"

"Ah but, Margaret," said Count Beron, soothingly, and still holding by the hand she had but

half withdrawn, "in this I fear you have but little choice, since the Administrator commands it."

"The Administrator!" cried the Curate, still more and more perplexed.

"The Administrator!" cried Margaret, her cheek blushing, and scarcely deigning to believe her ears, which tingled as if all the great bells of Moscow had rung an alarum.

"Yes," said the Count Eric Voss, "in me you behold Gustavus Vasa. I came to your door, my worthy friends, hungry, and ye gave me food, naked, and ye warmed me, friendless and a fugitive, and ye visited me in my solitude."

"Pardon the whimsical way I have taken to shew my gratitude; but, believe me," he added, laying his hand on his heart, "that it is not the less sincere on that account. I could have adopted no other method of bringing you before the assembled representatives of Sweden, in whose presence I now profess my obligations to you; and thus, taking you by the hand, declare myself proud in calling the Curate of Suverdsio my friend.

"I have ventured to unite before you, the hands of a pair, whose hearts, I understand, have long been united. Do you proceed in cementing more securely, according to the laws of the Church, what I have done merely in outward form. Bear no scruple towards your intended son; for, believe me, if he is a

renegade, it has merely been in deserting from the phalanx of oppression, to risk his blood under the standard of a few seemingly inefficient revolutionists. He has proved a true man and a brave; and scarcely hath the gratitude of his country deemed the title of Count a sufficient equivalent for his many and important services.

"I rejoice, at the same time, to inform you of a resolution not yet publicly promulgated. This honourable assembly, not resting content with merely emancipating our dear country from the manacles of civil bondage, have decreed its release from the tyrannical dominion of Rome; and ordain you, henceforward from this day, to preach the doctrines of the reformation."

We shall not attempt in words any description of the ecstasy of the honest Curate. The sincerity of his heart he had shewn in adversity, and the same was unchanged and unaltered in this his more prosperous hour. To all the pressing offers of dignity which Gustavus made, his only reply was, that he had found real happiness to consist in inward consciousness, and not in external parade; that he trusted he would not entice him away from the charge of his mountain flock,—with them he had been born and bred,—on him they looked as a father,—among them had glided away the happiness of his youthful days,—to them he had expounded the doctrines of eternal life,—and now, that a clearer

light had been permitted to dawn in on their souls, he could find no earthly satisfaction equal to that of being permitted to communicate it to them.

Why lengthen our joyous tale? Suffice it to say, that preparations were made for a magnificent wedding; and that the whole court of Sweden were invited to behold the nuptials of the Curate's daughter, who had preserved the life of Gustavus Vasa,—and of Count Regner Berop, one of the best and bravest of his generals. The Curate pronounced his paternal blessing over them.

Need it be told, how, returning, honourably escorted, and basking in the sunshine of the Administrator's favour, the Curate became the most distinguished man in his native district; nor, unto this day, have the mountains of Dalecarlia beheld a Curate honoured like him of Suverdsio.

On reaching home, the Curate summoned Gunnar to receive from the Count a purse of gold, as a grateful testimonial of his remembered services. Gunnar, with an awkward scratch of his head, said that he would as lief have something else, which his master, after half a minute's cross-questioning, discovered to be the hand of Katherine. In the course of a few days he was enabled to render him the happiest man among the hills, by giving him both.

After these transactions, by which some tinge of romance was infused into the dull leaven of the occurrences of common life, the Curate had many

useful years added to the span of his felicities,—beholding his family honoured and flourishing around him,—his country independent, happy, and prosperous,—and the bright sunshine of the reformation scattering from the face of the land the Cimmerian darkness of papal superstition.

Generations have passed away—centuries have revolved since then, and our tale is but a leaf torn out from the bypast volume of human transactions, having for its moral, that "purity of life hath for its reward the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." To attest its truth, the parish church of Suverdsio, among the Dalecarlian hills, yet bears on its top the large gilt copper crown, which was placed there by order of the Swedish senate; and its revered walls are still pointed out to the traveller as those within which Gustavus Vasa found an asylum from the pursuit of his enemies.

Now, upon the honour of an elder of the kirk, and a member of the tailor incorporation, ye have the whole of the unknown gentleman's story, word for word, as it is set down in the papers found by me in the side-pocket of the grand velvet coat, bought from the auld-farrant Welsh flunky with the peaked hat and the pigtail. To say nothing of the man

and his master, being now "down among the dead men," good right have I to print every thing I can find to make ends meet. But ye'll hear.

In the Yankee almanack of Poor Richard, which I sometimes read, it is set down, with great rationality, that "we should never buy for the bargain's sake." I found this to my cost in this matter; for, cheap as the coat and waistcoat seemed, I made no great shakes of them after all. After hanging at my window for two or three months, collecting all the idle wives and ragged weans of the parish to glowr and gaze at them from morn till night, during which time I got half of my lozens broken by their knocking one another's heads through, I was obliged to get quit of them at last, by selling them to a man and his son that kept dancing dogs, Pan's pipes, and a tambourine; and that made a livelihood by tumbling on a carpet in the middle of the street, the one playing as the other whummled head over heels.

Knowing that they were not for every body's wear, and that the like of them were not to be found in a country side, I put a decent price on them; "foreign birds with fair feathers" aye taking the top place of the market. When I mentioned forty shillings to the dancing-dog man and his son, they said nothing, but took up their hats, wishing me a good day; but, next forenoon, a slight-of-hand man having arrived, that was likely to take the shine out of them, and maybe purchase my article—which was

capital for his purpose, having famous wide sleeves; they came back, asking the liberty of taking them home to their lodgings for ten minutes, to see how they would fit; and, in that case, offering me thirty shillings and an old flute. The old flute was for next to no use at all, except for wee Benjie, poor thing, too-tooing on, and I told them so, but would take their offer, not to quarrel.

Home went the man, and home went the son, and home went my grand coat and waistcoat over his arm; but where their home lay, or whether the claes fitted or not, gudeness knows,—having never to this blessed day heard word or wittens of them. It just shows us how simple Scotch folk are. The Englisher swindled me out of my room-rent and my Sunday velveteens: the Eirishers made free with my hen-house, committing black robbery at the dead hour of night: and here a decent-looking auld Welshman, with a pigtail, palmed a grand coat and waistcoat upon me, that were made away with by a man and his son, too long out of Botany-Bay.

Verily, verily, this is a wicked world!

CHAPTER XII.

VOLUNTEERING.

Come from the hills where your hirsels are grazing,
Come from the glen of the buck and roe;
Come to the crag where the beacon is blazing,
Come with the buckler, the lance, and the bow:
Many a banner spread
Flutters above your head,
Many a crest that is famous in story;
Mount and make ready then,
Sons of the mountain glen,
Fight for the King, and our old Scottish glory.
SIR WALTER SCOTT'S *Monastery*.

THE sough of war and invasion flew o'er the face of the land, at this time, like a great whirlwind; and the hearts of men died within their persons with fear and trembling. The accounts that came from abroad were just dreadful beyond all power of description: Death stalked about from place to place, like a lawless tyrant, and the blood of men was spilt like water. The heads of crowned kings were cut off; and great dukes and lords were thrown into dark dungeons, or obligated to flee for their lives into

foreign lands, and to seek out hiding-places of safety beyond the waves of the sea. What was worst of all, our trouble seemed a smittal one; the infection spread around; and even our own land, which all thought hale and healthy, began to show symptoms of the plague-spot. Losh me! that men, in their seven senses, could have ever shown themselves so infatuated. Johnny Wilkes and liberty was but a joke to what was hanging over our heads, brewing like a dark tempest, which was to swallow us up. Bills were posted up through night, by hands that durst not have been seen at the work through day; and the agents of the Spirit of Darkness, calling themselves the friends of the people, held secret meetings, and hatched plots to blow up our blessed King and Constitution.

Yet the business, though fearsome in the main, was in some parts almost laughable. Every thing was to be divided, and every one made alike: houses and lands were to be distributed by lot; and the mighty man and the beggar—the auld man and the hobble-de-hoy—the industrious man and the spendthrift—the maimed, the cripple, and the blind, made all just brethren, and alike. Save us! but to think of such havers!!—At one of their meetings, held at the sign of the Tappet-hen and the Tankard, there was a prime fight between Tammy Bowsie the snab, and auld Thrashem the dominie with the boulie-back, about their drawing cuts, which was to

get Dalkeith Palace, and which Newbattle Abbey. Oh, sic riff raff ! ! !

What was worst of all, it was an agreed and determined-on thing among them, these wise men of the north, to abolish all kings, clergy, and religion, as havers. No, no—what need had such wise pows as theirs, of being taught or lectured to? What need had such feelosophers of having a King to rule over them, or a Parliament to direct them? There was not a single one among their number, that did not think himself, in his own conceit, as wise as Solomon, or William Pitt, and as mighty as King Nebuchadnezzar.

It was full time to put a stop to all such nonsense. The newspapers told us what it had done abroad; and what better could we expect from it at home? Weeds will not grow into flowers anywhere, and no man can handle tar without being defiled; the first of which comparisons is I daresay true, and the latter must be—for we read of it in Scripture. Well, as I was saying, it was a brave notion of the King to put the loyalty of his land to the test, that the daft folk might be dismayed, and that the clanjamphrey might be tumbled down before their betters, like windle-straes in a hurricane:—and so they were.

Such a crowd that day, when the names of the volunteers came to be taken down! No house could have held them, even though many had not come, who thought to have got their names enrolled. Losh

me! did they think the government was so far gone, as to take creatures with deformed legs, and thrawn necks, and blind een, and hashie lips, and grey hairs on their pows? No, no, they were not put to such straits; though it showed that the right spirit was in them, and that, though their bodies might be deformed, they had consciences to direct them, and souls to be saved like their neighbours.

I will never forget the first day that I got my regimentals on; and when I looked myself in the bit glass, just to think I was a sodger, who never in my life could thole the smell of powder, and had not fired anything but a penny cannon on a Fourth of June, when I was a haflins callant. I thought my throat would have been cut with the black corded stock; for, whenever I looked down, without thinking like, my chaft-blade played clank against it, with such a dunt that I mostly chacked my tongue off. And, as to the soaping of the hair, that beat cock-fighting. It was really fearsome; but I could scarcely keep from laughing when I glee'd 'round over my shouther, and saw a long glazed leather queue hanging for half an ell down the braid of my back, and a pickle horse hair curling out like a rotten's tail at the far end of it. And then the worsted taissels on the shouthers—and the lead buttons—and the yellow facings,—oh, but it was grand! I sometimes fancied myself a general, and giving the word of command. Then the pipe-clayed breeks—but that

was a sore job; many a weary arm did they give me—beat-beating camstane into them.

The pipe-claying of the breeches, I was saying, was the most fashious job, let alone courtship, that ever mortal man put his hand to. Indeed, there was no end to the rubbing, and scrubbing, and brushing, and fyling, and cleaning; for, to the like of me, who was not well accustomed to the thing, the whitening was continually coming off and destroying my red coat, or my black leggins. I had mostly forgot to speak of the birse for cleaning out the pan, and the piker for clearing the motion-hole. But time enough till we come to firing.

Big Sam, who was a sergeant of the Fencibles, and enough to have put five Frenchmen to flight any day of the year, whiles came to train us; and a hard battle he had with more than me. I have already said, that nature never intended me for the soldiering trade; and why should I hesitate about confessing, that Sam never got me out of the awkward squad? But I had two or three neighbours to keep me in countenance. A weary work we made with the right, left,—left, right,—right-wheel, left-wheel, —to the right-about,—at ease,—attention,—by sections,—and all the rest of it. But then there is nothing in the course of nature that is useless; and what was to hinder me from acting as orderly, or being one of the camp-colour-men on head days?

We all cracked very crouse about fighting, when

we heard of garments rolled in blood, only from abroad; but one dark night, we got a fleg in sober earnest.

There were signal-posts on the hills, up and down all the country, to make alarms, in case of necessity; and I never went to my bed without giving first a glee eastward to Falside-brae, and then another westward to the Calton-hill, to see that all the country was quiet. I had just papped in—it might be about nine o'clock,—after being gay hard drilled, and sore between the shouthers, with keeping my head back, and playing the dumb-bells; when lo! and behold, instead of getting my needful rest, in my own bed, with my wife and wean, jow gaed the bell, and row-de-dow gaed the drums, and all, in a minute, was confusion and uproar. I was seized with a severe shaking of the knees, and a flaffing at the heart; but I hurried, with my night-cap on, up to the garret window, and there I too plainly saw that the French had landed—for all the signal-posts were in a bleeze. This was in reality to be a soldier! I never got such a fright since the day I was cleckit. Then such a noise and hullabaloo, in the streets—men, women, and weans, all hurrying through ither, and crying with loud voices, amid the dark, as if the day of judgment had come, to find us all unprepared; and still the bells ringing, and the drums beating to arms. Poor Nanse was in a

bad condition, and I was well worse; she, at the fears of losing me, their bread-winner; and I, with the grief of parting from her, the wife of my bosom, and going out to scenes of blood, bayonets, and gunpowder, none of which I had the least stomach for. Our little son, Benjie, mostly grat himself blind, pulling me back by the cartridge-box; but there was no contending with fate, so he was obliged at last to let go.

Notwithstanding all that, we behaved ourselves like true-blue Scotsmen, called forth to fight the battles of our country; and, if the French had come, as they did not come, they would have found that to their cost, as sure as my name is Mansie. However, it turned out as well, in the meantime, that it was a false alarm, and that the thief Buonaparte had not landed at Dunbar, as it was jaloused: so, after standing under arms for half the night, with nineteen rounds of ball-cartridge in our boxes, and the baggage carts all loaden, and ready to follow us to the field of battle, we were sent home to our beds; and notwithstanding the awful state of alarm to which I had been put, never in the cour e of my life did I enjoy six hours sounder sleep; for we were hippet the morning parade, on account of our being kept so long without natural rest. It is wise to pick a lesson even out of our adversities; and, at all events, it was at this time fully shown to us he

necessity of our regiment being taught the art of firing—a tactic to the length of which they had never yet come.

Next day, out we were taken for the whilk purpose, and we went through our motions bravely. Prime—load—handle cartridge—ram down cartridge—return bayonets—and shoulder hoop—make ready—present—fire. Such was the confusion, and the flurry, and the din of the report, that I was so flustered and confused, that, will ye believe it? I never yet had mind to pull the tricker. Howsomever, I minded aye with the rest to ram down a fresh cartridge, at the word of command; and something told me I would repent not doing like the rest, (for I had half a kind of notion that my piece never went off;) so, when the firing was over, the sergeant of the company ordered all that had loaded pieces to come to the front. I swithered a little, not being very sure like what to do; but some five or six stept out; and our corporal, on looking at my piece, ordered me with the rest to the front. It was just by all the world like an execution; us six, in the face of the regiment, in a little line, going through our manœuvres at the word of command; and I could hardly stand upon my feet, with a queer feeling of fear and trembling, till, at length, the terrible moment came. I looked straight forward—for I durst not jee my head about, and turned to the hills and green trees, as if I was never to see nature more.

Our pieces were cocked; and, at the word, off they went. It was an act of desperation to draw the tricker, and I had hardly well shut my eyes, when I got such a thump in the shoulder, as knocked me backwards head-over-heels on the grass. Before I came to my senses, I could have sworn I was in another world; but, when I opened my eyes, there were the men at ease, holding their sides, laughing like to spleet them; and my gun lying on the ground, two or three ell before me.

When I found myself not killed outright, I began to rise up. As I was rubbing my breek-knees, I saw one of the men going forward to lift up the fatal piece; and my care for the safety of others overcame the sense of my own peril,—"Let alane—let alane!" cried I to him, "and take care of yoursell, for it has to gang off five times yet."

The laughing was now terrible; but being little of a soldier, I thought in my innocence, that we should hear as many reports as I had crammed cartridges down her muzzle. This was a sore joke against me for a length of time; but I tholed it patiently, considering cannily within myself, that knowledge is only to be bought by experience. A fool once showed me the story afterwards in a jest-book, as if it was not true!!!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHINCOUGH PILGRIMAGE.

Man hath a weary pilgrimage
  As through the world he wends:
On every stage from youth to age
  Still discontent attends.
With heaviness he casts his eye
  Upon the road before,
And still remembers with a sigh
  The days that are no more.

SOUTHEY.

SOME folks having been bred up from their cradle to the writing of books, of course naturally do the thing regularly and scientifically, but that's not to be expected from the like of me, that have followed no other way of life than the shaping and sewing line. It behoves me, therefore, to beg pardon for not being able to carry my history aye regularly straight forward, and for being forced whiles to zig-zag and vandyke. For instance, I clean forgot to give, in its proper place, a history of one of my travels with

Benjie in my bosom, in search of a cure for the chincough.

My son Benjie, was, at this 'dividual time, between four and five years old, when, poor wee chieldie, he took the chincough, and in more respects than one was not in a good way; so the doctor recommended his mother and me, for the change of air, first to carry him down a coal-pit, and syne to the limekilns at Cousland.

The coal-pit I could not think of at all; to say nothing of the danger of swinging down into the bowels of the earth in a creel, the thing aye put me in mind of the awful place, where the wicked, after death and judgment, howl, and hiss, and gnash their teeth; and where—unless Heaven be more merciful than we are just—we may all be soon enough. So I could not think of that, till all other human means failed; and I determined, in the first place, to hire Tammy Dobie's cart, and try a smell of the fresh air about the limekilns.

It was a fine July forenoon, and the cart, filled with clean straw, was at the door by eleven o'clock; so our wife handed us out a pair of blankets to hap round me, and syne little Benjie into my arms, with his big-coatie on, and his leather cappie tied below his chin, and a bit red worsted comforterie round his neck; for, though the sun was warm and pleasant withal, we dreaded cold, as the doctor bade us. Oh, he was a fine auld man Doctor Hartshorn!

We had not well got out of the town, when Tammie Dobbie louped up on the fore-tram. He was a crouse, cantie auld cock, having seen much and not little in his day, so he began a pleasant confab, pointing out all the gentlemen's houses round the country, and the names of the farms on the hill sides. To one like me, whose occupations tie him to the town-foot, it really is a sweet and grateful thing to be let loose, as it were, for a wee among the scenes of peace and quietness, where nature is in a way wild and wanton—where the clouds above our heads seem to sail along more grandly over the bosom of the sky, and the wee birds to cheep and churm, from the hedges among the fields, with greater pleasure, feeling that they are God's free creatures.

I cannot tell how many thoughts came over my mind, one after another, like the waves of the sea down on Musselburgh beach; but especially the days when I was a wee callant with a daidly at Dominie Duncan's school, were fresh in my mind as if the time had been but yesterday; though much, much was I changed since then, being at that time a little, careless, ragged laddie, and now the head of a family, earning bread to my wife and wean by the sweat of my brow. I thought on the blythe summer days when I dandered about the braes and bushes seeking birds'-nests with Alick Bowsie and Samuel Search; and of the time when we stood upon one another's backs, to speil up to the ripe cherries that

hung over the garden walls of Woodburn. Awful changes had taken place since then! I had seen Sammy Search die of the black jaundice; and poor Alick Bowsie married to a drucken randie, that wore the breeks, and did not allow the misfortunate creature the life of a dog.

When I was meditating thus, after the manner of the patriarch Isaac, there was a pleasant sadness at my heart, though it was like to leap to my mouth; but I could not get leave to enjoy it long for the tongue of Tammie Dobbie. He bade me look over into a field, about the middle of which were some wooden railings round the black gaping mouth of a coal-pit. "Div ye see that dark bit owre yonder amang the green clover, wi' the sticks about it?" asked Tammie.

"Yes," said I; "and what for?"

"Weil, do ye ken," quo' Tammie, "that has been a weary place to mair than ane. Twa three year ago some o' the collyer bodies were choked to death down below wi' a blast of foul air; and a pour o' orphan weans they left behint them on the cauldrife parish. But ye'll mind Horn'em the sherry-officer, wi' the thrawn shouther?"

"Ou, bravely; I believe he came to some untimeous end hereaway abouts?"

"Just in that spat," answered Tammie. "He was a drucken, blustering chield, as ye mind; fearing neither man nor de'il, and living a wild, wicked,

regardless life; but, puir man, that couldna aye last. He had been bousing about the countryside somehow—maybe harrying out of house and hald some puir bodies that hadna the wherewith to pay their rents; so, in riding hame fou—it was pit-mirk, and the rain pouring down in bucketfu's,—he became dumbfoundered wi' the darkness and the dramming thegether; and, losing his way, wandered about the fields, hauling his mare after him by the bridle. In the morning the beast was found nibbling away at the grass owre by yonder, wi' the saddle upon its back, and a broken bridle hinging down about its fore-legs, by the which the folks round were putten upon the scent; for, on making search down yon pit, he was fund at the bottom, wi' his brains smashed about him, and his legs and arms broken to chitters!"

"Save us!" said I, "it makes a' my flesh grue."

"Weil it may," answered Tammie, "or the story's lost in the telling; for the collyers that fand him shook as if they had been seized wi' the ague. The dumb animal, ye observe, had far mair sense than him; for, when his fitting gaed way, instead of following, it had plunged back, and the bit o' the bridle, that had broken, was still in his grup, when they spied him wi' their lanterns."

"It was an awful like-way to leave the world," said I. "'Deed it was, and nae less," answered Tammie, "to gang to his lang account in the middle

of his mad thochtlessness, without a moment's warning. But see yonder's Cousland lying right forrit to the east hand."

At this very nick of time Benjie was seized with a severe kink; so Tammie stopped his cart, and I held his head over the side of it till the cough went by. I thought his inside would have jumped out; but he fell sound asleep in two or three minutes; and we jogged on till we came to the yill-house door, where, after louping out, we got a pickle pease strae to Tammie's horse.

CHAPTER XIV.

MY LORD'S RACES.

Aff they a' went gallopping, gallopping;
Legs and arms a' wallopping, wallopping;
De'il take the hindmost, quo' Duncan M'Calapin,
The Laird of Tillyben, joe.

Old Song.

He went a little farther,
Ana turned his head aside,
And just by Goodman Whitfield's gate,
Oh there the mare he spied.
He asked her how she did,
She stared him in the face,
Then down she laid her head again—
She was in wretched case.

Old Poulter's Mare.

It happened curiously that, of all the days of the year, this shoul.. have been the one on which the Carters'-play was held; and, by good luck, we were just in time to see that grand sight. The whole regiment of carters were paraded up at my Lord's door, for so they call their boxmaster; and a beautiful thing it was I can assure ye. What a sight of

ribbons was on the horses! Many a crame must have been emptied ere such a number of manes and long tails could have been busked out. The beasts themselves, poor things, I dare say wondered much at their bravery, and no less I am sure did the riders. They looked for all the world like living haberdashery shops. Great bunches of wall-flower, thyme, spearment, and southernwood, were stuck in their button-holes; and broad belts of stripped silk, of every colour in the rainbow, were flung across their shoulders. As to their hats, the man would have had a clear ee that could have kent what was their shape or colour. They were all rowed with ribbons, and puffed about the rim, with long green or white feathers; and cockades were stuck on the off side, to say nothing of long strips fleeing behind them in the wind, like streamers. Save us! to see men so proud of finery: if they had been peacocks one would have thought less; but in decent sober men, the heads of small families, and with no great wages, the thing was crazy-like.

At long and last we saw them all set in motion, like a regiment of dragoons, two and two, with a drum and fife at their head, as if they had been marching to the field of battle. By the bye, it was two of our own volunteer lads that were playing that day before them, Rory Skirl, the snab, and Geordie Thump, the dyer; so this ye see verified the auld proverb, that, travel where ye like, to the world's

end, ye'll aye meet with kent faces; Tammie and me coming out to the yill-house door to see them pass by.

Behind the drum and fife, came a big half-crazy looking chield, with a broad blue bonnet on his head, and a red worsted clurry sticking in the crown of it. He was carrying a new car-saddle over his shoulder on a well-cleaned pitchfork. Syne came three abreast, one on each side of my Lord, being the key keepers; he keeping the box, and they keeping the keys, in case like he should take any thing out. And syne came the auld my Lord—him that was my Lord last year, ye observe; and syne came the colours, as bright and bonny as mostly any thing ye ever saw. On one of them was painted a plough and harrows, and a man sowing wheat; over the top of which were gilded letters, the which I was able to read when I put on my specs, being, if I mind well, "Speed the Plough." On the other one, which was a mazarine blue, with yellow fringes, was the picture of two carters, with flat bonnets on their heads, the tane with a whip in his hand, and the tither a rake, making hay like. Then came they all passing by tw and two, looking as if each one of them had been the Duke of Buccleuch himself, every one rigged out in his best; the young callants, such like as had just entered the box, coming hindmost, and thinking themselves, I dare say, no small drink,

and the day a great one, when they were first allowed to be art and part in such a grand procession.

But, losh me! I had mostly forgot the piper, that played in the middle, as proud as Hezekiah, that we read of in 2d Kings, strutting about from side to side with his bare legs, and big buckles, and bit Macgregor tartan jacket—his cheeks blown up with wind like a smith's bellows—the feathers dirling with conceit in his bonnet—and the drone, below his oxter, squeeling and skirling like an evil spirit tied up in a green bag. Keep us all! what gleys he gied about him to observe that the folk were looking at him! He put me in mind of the song that auld Barny used to sing about the streets—

> Ilka ane his sword and dirk has,
> Ilka ane as proud's a Turk is;
> There's the Grants o' Tullochgorum,
> Wi' their pipers gaun before 'em;
> Proud the mithers are that bore 'em,
> Feedle, faddle, fa, fum.

But who do ye think should come up to us at this blessed moment, with a staff in his hand, being old now, and not able to ride in the procession, as he had many a time and often done before, but honest Saunders Tram, that had been a staunch customer of mine since the day on which I opened shop; so we shook hands jocosely together, like old acquaintances, and the body hodged and leuch as if he had found a fiddle, he was so glad to see me.

Benjie having fallen asleep, Luckie Barm of the Change, a douce woman, put him to his bed, and promised to take care of him till we came back, Saunders Tram insisting on us to go forward along with him to see the race. I had no great scruple to do this, as I thought Benjie would likely sleep for an hour, being wearied with the jooggling of the cart, and having supped a mutchkin bowlful of Luckie Barm's broo and bread.

By the time we had tramped on to the braehead, two or three had booked for the race, and were busy pulling away the flowers that hung over about their horses' lugs, to say little of the tapes and twine, and which mad them look, poor brutes, as if they were not very sure what was the matter with them. And there was a terrible uproar between my Lord and a man from Edinburgh Grassmarket, leading a limping horse, covered with a dirty sheet, with two holes for the beast's een looking out at.

But, for all this outward care, the poor thing seemed very like as if wind was more plenty in the land than corn, being thin and starved-looking, and as lame as Vulcan in h off hind leg. So ye see he insisted on its not running; and the man said "it had a right to run as well as any other horse;" and my Lord said "it had no such thing, as it was not in the box;" and the man said "he would take out a protest;" and my Lord said "he didna gie a bawbee for a protest;" and "that he would not allow him

to run on any account whatsoever;" but the man was throng all the time they were argle-bargling taking the cover off the beast's back, that was ready saddled, and as accoutred for running as our regiment of volunteers was for fighting on field-days. So he swore like a trooper, that, notwithstanding all their debarring, he would run in spite of their teeth —both my Lord's teeth, ye observe, and that of the two key-keepers;—maybe, too, of the man that carried the saddle, for he aye lent in a word at my Lord's back, egging him on to stand out for the laws.

To cut a long tale short, the drum ruffed, and off set *four of them, a black one, and a white one, and a brown one, and the man's one, neck and neck*, as neat as ye like. The race course was along the high road; and, dog on it, they made a noise like thunder, throwing out their big heavy feet behind them; and whisking their tails from side to side as if they would have dung out one another's een, till, not being used to gallop, they at last began to funk and fling; syne first one stopping, and then another, wheeling round and round about like peeries, in spite of the riders whipping them, and pulling them by the heads. The man's mare, however, from the Grassmarket, with the limping leg, carried on, followed by the white one, an old tough brute, that had belonged in its youth to a trumpeter of the Scots Greys; and, to tell the truth, it shewed mettle still, though far past its best; so back they came, neck

and neck, all the folk crying, and holloing, and clapping their hands—some, "Weil dune the lame ane—five shillings on the lame ane;"—and others, "Weil run Bonaparte—at him, auld Bonaparte—two to one that Whitey beats him all to sticks,"—when, dismal to relate, the limping-legged ane couped the creels, and old white Bonaparte came in with his tail cocked amid loud cheering, and no small clapping of hands.

We all ran down the road to the place where the limping horse was lying, for it was never like to rise up again any more than the bit rider, that was thrown over its head like an arrow out of a bow; but on helping him to his feet, save and except the fright, two wide screeds across his trowser-knees, and a scratch along the brig of his nose, nothing visible was to be perceived. It was different, however, with the limping horse. Misfortunate brute! one of its fore legs had folded below it, and snapped through at the fetlock joint. There was it lying with a sad sorrowful look, as if it longed for death to come quick, and end its miseries; the blood, all the while, gush-gushing out at the gaping wound. To all it was as plain as the A, B, C, that the bones would never knit; and that, considering the case it was in, it would be an act of Christian charity to put the beast out of pain. The maister gloomed, stroked his chin, and looked down, kenning, weil-a-wat, that he had lost his bread-winner, then gave

his head a nod, nod—thrusting both his hands down to the bottom lining of the pockets of his long square-tailed jockey coat. He was a wauf hallanshaker-looking cheild, with an old broad-snouted japanned beaver hat pulled over his brow—one that seemed by his phisog to hold the good word of the world as nothing—and that had, in the course of circumstances, been reduced to a kind of wild desperation, either by chance-misfortunes, cares and trials, or, what is more likely, by his own sinful regardless way of life.

"It canna be helpit," he said, giving his head a bit shake, "it canna be helpit, friends. Ay, Jess, ye were a gude ane in yere day, lass,—mony a penny and pound have I made out of ye. Which o' ye can lend me a hand, lads? Rin away for a gun some o' ye."

Here Thomas Clod interfered with a small bit of advice—a thing that Thomas was good at, being a Cameronian elder, and accustomed to giving a word. "Wad ye no think it better," said Thomas, "to stick her with a long gully-knife, or a sharp shoemaker's parer. It wad be an easier way, I'm thinking."

Dog on it! I could scarcely keep from shuddering when I heard them speaking in this wild, heathenish, bloody sort of a manner.

"Deed no," quo' Thomas Tram, at whose side I standing, "far better send away for the smith's

forehammer, and hit her a smack or twa betwixt the een; so ye wad settle her in half a second."

"No, no: a better plan than a' that wad be to make a strong kinch of ropes, and hang her."

Lovey ding! such ways of shewing how to be merciful!! But the old Jockey himself interfered. "Haud yere tongues, fules," was his speech; "yonder's the man coming wi' a gun. We'll shune put an end to her. She would have won for a hunder pounds, if she hadna broken her leg.—Wha'll wager me that she wadna hae won? But she's the last of my stable, puir beast; and I havena ae plack to rub against anither, now that I have lost her. Gi'e me the gun and the penny candle. Is she loaded?" speired he at the man that carried the piece.

"Troth is she," was the answer, "double charged."

"Then stand back, lads," quod the old round-shouthered horse-couper, and ramming down the candle, he lifted up the piece, cocking it as he went four or five yards in front of the poor bleeding brute, that seemed, though she could not rise, to know what he was about with the weapon of destruction; casting her black ee up at him, and looking pitifully in his face.

When I saw him taking his aim, and preparing to draw the trigger, I turned round my back, not being able to stand it; and brizzed the flats of my hands with all my pith, against the opening of my ears;

nevertheless, I heard a faint boom; so, heeling round, I observed the miserable bleeding creature lift her head, and pulling up her legs, give them a plunge down again on the divots; after which she lay still, and we all saw, to our satisfaction, that death had come to her relief.

We are not commanded to be the judges of our fellow-creatures, but to think charitably of all men, hoping all for the best; and, though the horse-couper was a thought suspicious, both in look, speech, dress, and outward behaviour, still, ever and anon, we were bound by the ten commandments to consider him only in the light of a fellow-creature in distress of mind and poverty of pocket; so we made a superscription for the poor man; and, though he did not look much like one that deserved our charity, nevertheless and howsoever, maybe he was a bad halfpenny, and maybe not, one thing was visibly certain, that he was as poor as Job,—misery being written in big-hand letters on his brow. So it behoved each one to open his purse as he could afford it; and, though I say not what I put into the hat, proud am I to tell that he collected two or three shillings to help him home.

This job being over to his mind as well as mine, and the money safely stowed into his big hinder coat-pocket—would ye believe it? ere yet the beast was scarcely cold, just as we were decamping from the place, and buttoning up our breeches-pockets, we

saw him casting his coat, and had the curiosity to stand still for a jiffy, to observe what he was after, in case, in the middle of his misfortunes, he was bent on some act of desperation; when, lo, and behold! he out with a gully-knife, and began skinning his old servant, as if he had been only peeling the bark off a fallen tree!

One cannot sit at their ingle-cheek and expect, without casting their eyes about them, to grow experienced in the ways of men, or the ongoings of the world. This spectacle gave me, I can assure you, much and no little insight; and so dowie was I with the thoughts of what I had witnessed of the selfishness, the sinfulness, and perversity of man, that I grew more and more homesick, thinking never so much in my life before of my quiet hearthstone and cheerful ingle; and though Thomas Clod insisted greatly on my staying to their head-meeting dinner, and taking a reel with the lassies in the barn; and Tammie Dobbie, the bit body, had got so much into the spirit of the thing, that little persuasion would have made him stay all night, yet I was determined to make the best of my way home; more-be-token, as Benjie might take skaith from the night-air, and our jaunt therefrom might, instead of contributing to his welfare, do him more harm than good. So, after getting some cheese and bread, to say nothing of a glass or two of strong beer and a dram at Luckie Barm's, we waited in her parlour as a pastime like,

till Benjie wakened; on the which I made Tammie yoke his beast; and, rowing the bit callant in his mother's shawl, took him into my arms in the cart, and drove away.

CHAPTER XV.

THE RETURN.

That sweet home is their delight,
And thither they repair
Cummunion with their own to hold!
Peaceful as, at the fall of night,
Two little lambkins gliding white
Return unto the gentle air,
That sleeps within the fold.
Or like two birds to their lonely nest,
Or wearied waves to their bay of rest,
Or fleecy clouds, when their race is run,
That hang in their own beauty blest,
'Mid the calm that sanctifies the west
Around the setting sun.

WILSON.

Hame, hame, hame, hame, fain wad I be,
Hame, hame, hame to my ain countrie.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

I MAY confess, without thinking shame, that I was glad when I found our nebs turned homeward; and, when we got over the turn of the brae at the old quarry-holes to see the blue smoke of our own Dalkeith, hanging like a thin cloud over the tops of the green trees, through which I perceived the glit-

tering weathercock on the old kirk steeple. Tammie, poor creature, I observed, was a whit ree with the good cheer; and, as he sat on the fore-tram, with his whip-hand thrown over the beast's haunches, he sang, half to himself and half-aloud, a great many old Scotch songs, such as "the Gaberlunzie," "Aiken Drum," "Tak' yere Auld Cloak about ye," and, "the Deuks dang ower my Daddie;" besides, "The Mucking o' Geordie's Byre," and "Ca' the Ewes to the Knowes," and so on; but, do what I liked, I could not keep my spirits up, thinking of the woeful end of the poor old horse, and of the ne'er-do-weel loon its maister. Many an excellent instruction of Mr. Wiggie's came to my mind, of how we misguided the good things that were lent us for our use here, by a gracious provider, who would, however, bid us render a final account to him of our conduct and conversation. I thought of how many were aye complaining and complaining, myself whiles among the rest, of the hardships and miseries, and the misfortunes of their lot; putting all down to the score of fate, and never once thinking of the plantations of sorrow, reared up from the seeds of our own sinfulness; or how any thing, save punishment, could come of the breaking of the ten commandments delivered to the patriarch Moses. Perhaps, reckoned I with myself, perhaps in this even I myself may have in this day's transactions erred. Here am I wandering about in a cart; ex-

posing myself to the defilement of the world, to the fear of robbers, and to the night air, in the search of health for a dwining laddie; as if the hand that dealt that blessing out was not as powerful at home as it is abroad. Had I remained at my own labroad, the profits of my day's work would have been over and above for the maintenance of my family, outside and inside; instead of which I have been at the expense of a cart-hire and a horse's up-putting, let alone Tammie's debosh and my own, besides the trifle of threepence to the round-shouthered old horse-couper with the slouched japan beaver hat. The story was too true a one; but alackaday it was now over late to repent!

As I was thus musing, the bright red sun of summer sank down behind the top of the Pentland Hills, and all looked bluish, dowie, and drearie, as if the heart of the world had been seized with a sudden dwalm, and the face of nature had at once withered from blooming youth into the hoariness of old age. Now and then the birds gave a bit chitter; and whiles a cow mooed from the fields; and the dew was falling like the little tears of the fairies out of the blue lift, where the gloaming-star soon began to glow and glitter bonnily.

What I had seen and witnessed made my thoughts heavy and my heart sad; I could not get the better of it. I looked round and round me, as we jogged along over the height, down on the far distant coun-

try, that spread out, as if it had been a great big picture, with hills, and fields, and woods; and I could still see to the norward the ships lying at their anchors on the sea, and the shores of Fife far far beyond it. It was a great and a grand sight; and made me turn from the looking at it into my own heart, causing me to think more and more of the glory of the Maker's handiworks, and less and less of the littleness of prideful man. But Tammie had gotten his drappikie, and the tongue of the body would not lie still a moment; so he blethered on from one thing to another, as we jogged along, till I was forced, at the last, to give up thinking, and begin a twa-handed crack with him

"Have you your snuff-box upon ye?" said Tammie; "Gie me a pinch."

Having given him the box, I observed to him, that "it was beginning to grow dark and dowie."

"Deed is't," said Tammie; "but a body can now scarcely meet on the road wi' any thing waur than themsell. Mony a witch, de'il, and bogle, however, did my grannie see and hear tell of, that used to scud and scamper hereaway langsyne like maukins."

"Witches!" quo' I. "No, no Tammie, all these things are out of the land now; and muckle luck to them. But we have other things to fear: what think ye of highway robbers?"

"Highway robbers!" said Tammie. "Kay, kay;

I'll tell ye of something that I met in wi' mysell. Ae dark winter night as I was daundering hame frae Pathhead—it was pit-mirk, and about the twall —losh me! I couldna see my finger afore me—that a stupid thocht cam into my head that I wad never wun hame, but be either killed, lost, murdered, or drowned, between that and the dawing. All o' a sudden I sees a light coming dancing forrit amang the trees; and my hair began to stand up on end. Then, in the next moment, save us a'! I sees anither light, and forrit, forrit they baith cam, like the een of some great fiery monster, let loose frae the pit o' darkness by its maister, to seek whom it might devour."

"Stop, Tammie," said I to him, "ye'll wauken Benjie. How far are we from Dalkeith?"

"Twa mile and a bittock," answered Tammie. "But wait a wee.—Up cam the two lights snoov-snooving, nearer and nearer; and I heard distinctly the sound of feet that werena men's—cloven feet, maybe—but nae wheels. Sae nearer it cam and nearer, till the sweat began to pour owre my een as cauld as ice; and, at lang and last, I fand my knees beginning to gi' way; and, after tot-tottering for half a minute, I fell down, my staff playing bleach out before me. When I cam to mysell, and opened my een, there were the twa lights before me, bleez-bleezing, as if they wad blast my sight out. And

what did they turn out to be, think ye? The di'el or spunkie, whilk o' them?"

"I'm sure I canna tell," said I.

"Naithing mair then," answered Tammie, "but twa bowets; ane tied to ilka knee of auld Doofie, the half-crazy horse-doctor, mounted on his lang-tailed naig, and away through the dark by himsell, at the dead hour o' night, to the relief of a man's mare seized with the batts, somewhere down about Oxenfor'."

I was glad that Tammie's story had ended in this way, when out came another tramping on its heels.

"Do ye see the top of yon black trees to the norward there, on the braehead?"

"I think I do," was my reply. "But how far, think ye, are we from home now?"

"About a mile and a half," said Tammie.—"Weil, as to the trees, I'll tell ye something about them.

"There was an auld widow-leddy lived lang syne about the town-end of Dalkeith. A sour, cankered, auld body—she's dead and rotten lang ago. But what I was gaun to say, she had a bonny bit fair-haired, blue-e'ed lassie of a servant-maid, that lodg-ed in the house wi' her, just by all the world like a lamb wi' an wolf; a bonnier quean, I've heard tell, never steppit in leather shoon; so all the young lads in the gate-end were wooing at her,

and fain to have her; but she wad only have ae joe for a' that. He was a journeyman wright, a trades-lad, and they had come, three or four year before, frae the same place thegither; maybe having had a liking for ane anither since they were bairns: so they were gaun to be married the week after Da'keith Fair, and a' was settled. But what, think ye, happened. He got a drap drink, and a recruiting party listed him in the king's name, wi' pitting a white shilling in his loof.

"When the poor lassie heard what had come to pass, and how her sweetheart had taen the bounty, she was like to gang distrackit, and took to her bed. The doctor never took up her trouble; and some said it was a fever. At last she was roused out o't, but naebody ever saw her laugh after; and frae ane that was as cantie as a lintie, she became as douce as a quaker, though she aye gaed cannily about her wark, as if amaist naething had happened. If she was ony way light-headed before, to be sure she wasna that noo; but just what a decent quean should be, sitting for hours by the kitchen fire her lane, reading the bible, and thinking, wha kens, of what wad become o' the wicked after they died; and so ye see——"

"What light is yon?" said I interrupting him, wishing him like to break aff.

"Ou, its just the light on some of the coal hills. the puir blackened creatures will be gaun down to

their wark. It's an unyearthly kind of trade, turning night intil day, and working like moudiewarts in the dark, when decent folks are in their beds sleeping.—And so, as I was saying, ye see, it happened ae Sunday night, that a chap cam to the back door; and the mistress too heard it. She was sitting in the foreroom wi' her specks on, reading some sermon book; but it was the maid that answered.

"In a while thereafter, she rang her bell, being a curious body, and aye anxious to ken a' thing of her ain affairs, let alane her neighbours; so, after waiting a wee, she rang again,—and better rang; then lifting up her stick, for she was stiff with the rheumaticks and decay of nature, she hirpled into the kitchen,—but feint a hait saw she there, save the open bible lying on the table, the cat streekit out before the fire, and the candle burning—the candle—na; I daur say I am wrang there, I believe it was a lamp, for she was a near ane. As for her maiden, there was no trace of her."

"What do ye think came owre her then?" said I to him, liking to be at my wits end. "Naething uncanny I daur say?"

"Ye'll hear in a moment," answered Tammie; "a' that I ken o' the matter. Ye see—as I asked ye before—yon trees on the hill-head to the norard; just below yon black cloud yonder?"

"Preceesely," said I—"I see them well enough."

"Weil, after a' thochts of finding her were gien

up, and it was fairly concluded, that it was the auld gudeman that had come and chappit her out, she was fund in a pond among yon trees, floating on her back, wi' her Sunday's claes on!!"

"Drowned?" said I to him.

"Drowned,—and as stiff as a deal board," answered Tammie. "But when she was drowned,—or how she came to be drowned,—or who it was drowned her,—has never been found out to this blessed moment."

"Maybe," said I, lending in my word, "maybe she had grown demented, and thrown herself in i' the dark."

"Or maybe," said Tammie, "the de'il flew away wi' her in a flash o' fire; and, soosing her down frae the lift, she landit in that hole, where she was fund floating. But, wo!—wo!" cried he to his horse, coming across its side with his whip; "We maun be canny; for this brig has a sharp turn, (it was the Cow Brig, ye know,) and many a one, both horse and man, have got their necks broken, by not being wary enough of that corner."

This made me a wee timorous, having the bit laddie Benjie fast asleep in my arms, and as I saw that Tammie's horse was a wee fidgety, and glad I dare say, poor thing, to find itself so near home. We heard the water, far down below, roaring and hushing over the rocks, and thro' among the Duke's woods,—big, thick, black trees, that threw their

branches, like giant's arms, half across the Esk, making all below as gloomy as midnight; while over the tops of them, high, high aboon, the bonnie wee starries were twink-twinkling far amid the blue. But there was no end to Tammie's tongue.

"Weel," said he, "speaking o' the brig, I'll tell you a gude story about that. Auld Jamie Bowie, the potato merchant, that lived at the gate-end, had a horse and cart, that met wi' an accident just at the turn o' the corner yonder; and up cam a chield sair forfaughten, and a' out of breath to Jamie's door, crying like the prophet Jeremiah to the auld Jews, 'Rin, rin away doun to the Cow Brig; for your cart's dung to shivers, and the driver's killed, as weel as the horse!'

"James ran in for his hat; but, as he was coming out at the door, he met another messenger, such as came running across the plain to King David, to acquaint him of the death of Absalom, crying 'Rin away doun, Jamie, rin away doun; your cart is standing yonder, without either horse or driver; for they're baith killed!'

"Jamie thanked heaven that the cart was to the fore; then rinning back for his stick, which he had forgotten, he stopped a moment to bid his wife not greet so loud, and was then rushing out in full birr, when he ran foul of a third chield, that mostly knocked doun the door in his hurry. 'Awfu' news, man, awfu' news, was the way o't, with this second Eli-

phaz the Temanite. 'Your cart and horse ran away, —and threw the driver, puir fellow, clean owre the brig into the water. No a crunch o' him is to be seen or heard tell of; for he was a' smashed to pieces!! It's an awfu' business!'

" 'But where's the horse? and where's the cart then?' askit Jamie, a thought brisker. 'Where's the horse and cart then, my man? Can ye tell me ought of that?'

" 'Ou,' said he 'they're baith doun at the Toll yonder, no a hair the waur.'

" 'That's the best news I've heard the nicht, my man.—Goodwife, I say, Goodwife; are ye deaf or donnart? Give this lad a dram; and, as it rather looks like a shower, I'll e'en no go out the night.—I'll easy manage to find another driver, though half a hundred o' the blockheads should get their brains knocked out.'

" Is not that a gude one noo?" quo, Tammie, laughing. " 'Od Jamie Boyle was a real ane. He wadna let them light a candle by his bed side to let him see to dee; he gied them a curse, and said that was needless extravagance."

Dog on it, thought I to myself, the farther in the deeper. This beats the round-shouthered horse-couper with the japan hat, skinning his reeking horse, all to sticks; and so I again fell into a gloomy sort of a musing; when, just as we came opposite the Duke's gate, with the deers on each side of it,

two men rushed out upon us, and one of them seized Tammie's horse by the bridle, as the other one held his horse-pistol to my nose, and bade me stop, in the King's name!

"Hold your hand, hold your hand for the sake of mercy!" cried I, "spare the father of a small family that will starve on the street, if ye take my life!! Hae,—hae,—there's every coin and copper I have about me in the world! Be merciful, be merciful; and do not shed blood, that will not, cannot be rubbed out of your conscience. Take all that we have —horse and cart and all if ye like, only spare our lives; and let us away home!"

"De'il's in the man," quo' Tammie, "horse and cart! that's a gude one! Na, na, lads; fire away gin ye like; for as lang as I hae a drap o' bluid in me, ye'll get neither. Better be killed than starve. Do your best, ye thieves that ye are; and I'll hae baith hanged neist week before the Fifteen!"

Every moment I expected my head to be shot off, till I got my hand clapped on Tammie's mouth, and could get cried to them—"Shoot him then, lads; shoot him then, lads, if he wants it; but take my siller like Christians; and let me away with my poor deeing bairn!"

The two men seemed a something dumbfoundered with what they heard; and I began to think them, if they were highway robbers, a wee slow at their trade; when, what think ye did they turn out to be

—only guess? Nothing more nor less than two excise officers, that had got information of some smuggled gin, coming up in a cart from Fisherrow Harbour, and were lurking on the road side, looking out for spuilzie!!

When they quitted us giggling, I could not keep from laughing too; though the sights I had seen, and the fright I had got, made me nervish and eerie; so blithe was I when the cart rattled on our own street, and I began to waken Benjie, as we were not above a hundred yards from our own door.

In this day's adventures, I saw the sin and folly of my conduct visibly, as I jumped out of the cart at our close mouth. So I determined within myself, with a strong determination, to behave more sensibly for the future, and think no more about lime-kilns and coal-pits; but to trust, for Benjie's recovery from the chincough, to a kind Providence, together with Daffy's elixir, and warm blankets.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BLOODY BUSINESS.

So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear;
And hears him in the rustling wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees;
And thinks—Here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he must fall in fight or I.

DRYDEN'S *Palamon and Arcite.*

Nay, never shake thy gory locks at me;
Thou canst not say I did it!

Macbeth.

It was on a fine summer morning, somewhere about four o'clock, when I wakened from my night's rest, and was about thinking to bestir myself, that I heard the sound of voices in the kail-yard stretching south from our back windows. I listened—and I listened—and I better listened—and still the sound of the argle-bargling became more distinct, now in a fleeching way, and now in harsh angry tones, as if some quarrelsome disagreement had taken place. I had not the comfort of my wife's company in this

dilemmy ; she being away, three days before, on the top of Tammie Trundle the carrier's cart, to Lauder, on a visit to her folks there ; her mother, (my gude-mother like,) having been for some time ill with an income in her leg, which threatened to make a lamiter of her in her old age, the two doctors there—not speaking of the blacksmith, and sundry skeely old women—being able to make nothing of the business ; so none happened to be with me in the room, saving wee Benjie, who was lying asleep at the back of the bed, with his little Kilmarnock on his head, as sound as a top. Nevertheless, I looked for my claes ; and, opening one half of the window shutter, I saw four young birkies, well dressed—indeed three of them customers of my own—all belonging to the town ; two of them young doctors, one of them a writer's clerk, and the other a grocer ; the whole looking very fierce and fearsome, like turkey-cocks ; swaggering about with arms as if they had been the king's dragoons ; and priming a pair of pistols, which one of the surgeons, a spirity, out-spoken lad, Maister Blister, was holding in his grip.

I jaloused at once what they were after, being now a wee up to fire-arms ; so I saw that skaith was to come of it ; and that I would be wanting in my duty on four heads,—first, as a Christian ; second, as a man ; third, as a subject ; and fourth, as a father ; if I withheld myself from the scene ; nor lifted up my voice, however fruitlessly, against such crying ini-

quity, as the wanton letting out of human blood; so forth I hastened, half dressed, with my grey stockings rolled up my thighs over my corduroys, and my old hat above my cowl, to the kail-yard of contention.

I was just in the nick of time; and my presence checked the effusion of blood for a little—but wait a wee. So high and furious were at least three of the party, that I saw it was catching water in a sieve to waste words on them, knowing, as clearly as the sun serves the world, that interceding would be of no avail. Howsoever, I made a feint, and threatened to bowl away for a magistrate, if they would not desist from their barbarous and bloody purpose; but, i'fegs, I had better have kept my counsel till it was asked for.

"Tailor Mansie," quoth Maister Thomas Blister, with a furious cock of his eye,—he was a queer Eirish birkie, come over for his education,—"since ye have ventured to thrust your nose, ma vourneen," said he, "where nobody invited ye, you must just stay," said he, "and abide by the consequences. This is an affair of honour," quoth he; "and if ye venture to stir one foot from the spot, och then, ma bouchal," said he, "by the poker of St. Patrick, but whisk through ye goes one of these leaden playthings, as sure as ye ever spoiled a coat, or cabbaged broad-cloth! Ye have now come out, ye observe,—hark ye," said he, "and are art and part in the business;—

and, if one, or both, of the principals be killed, poor devils," said he, "we are all alike liable to take our trial before the Justiciary Court, hark ye; and, by the powers," said he, "I doubt not but, on proper consideration, ma chree, that they will allow us to get off mercifully, on this side of hanging, by a verdict of manslaughter."

'Od, I found myself immediately in a scrape; but how to get out of it baffled my gumption. It set me all a shivering; yet I thought that, come the worst when it would, they surely would not hang the faither of a helpless small family, that had nothing but his needle for their support, if I made a proper affidavy, about having tried to make peace between the youths. So, conscience being a brave supporter, I abode in silence, though not without many queer and qualmish thoughts, and a pit-patting of the heart, not unco pleasant in the tholing.

"Blood and wounds!" bawled Maister Thomas Blister, "it would be a disgrace for ever on the honourable profession of physic," egging on poor Maister Willy Magneezhy, whose face was as white as double-bleached linen, "to make any apology for such an insult. Arrah, my honey! you not fit to doctor a cat,—you not fit to bleed a calf,—you not fit to poultice a pig,—after three years' apprenticeship," said he, "and a winter with Doctor Monro? By the cupping glasses of Pocrates," said he, "and by the pistol of Gallon, but I would have

caned him on the spot, if he had just let out half as much to me! Look ye, man," said he, "look ye, man, he is all shaking;" (this was a god's truth,) "he'll turn tail. At him like fire, Willy."

Magneezhy, though sadly frightened, looked a thought brighter; and made a kind of half step forward. "Say that ye'll ask my pardon once more, —and if not," said the poor lad, with a voice broken and trembling, "then we must just shoot one another."

"Devil a bit," answered Maister Bloatsheet, "devil a bit. No, sir; you must down on your bare knees, and beg ten thousand pardons for calling me out here, in a raw morning; or I'll have a shot at you, whether you will or not."

"Will you stand that?" said Blister, with eyes like burning coals. "By the living jingo, and the holy poker, Magneezhy, if you stand that—if you stand that, I say, I stand no longer your second, but leave you to disgrace, and a caning. If he likes to shoot you like a dog, and not as a gentleman, then, cuishla ma chree,—his will be done."

"No, sir," replied Magneezhy, with a quivering voice, which he tried in vain, poor fellow, to render warlike, (he had never been in the volunteers like me.) "Hand us the pistols then; and let us do or die!"

"Spoken like a hero, and brother of the lancet: as little afraid at the sight of your own blood, as at

that of other people," said Blister. "Hand over the pistols."

It was an awful business. Gude save us, such goings on in a Christian land! While Mr. Bloatsheet, the young writer, was in the act of cocking the bloody weapon, I again, but to no purpose, endeavoured to slip in a word edgeways. Magneezhy was in an awful case; if he had been already shot, he could not have looked more clay and corpse-like; so I took a kind of whispering, while the stramash was drawing to a bloody conclusion, with Mr. Harry Molasses, the fourth in the spree, who was standing behind Bloatsheet, with a large mahogany box under his arm, something in shape like that of a licensed packman, ganging about from house to house, through the country-side, selling toys and trinkets; or niffering plaited ear-rings, and sic like, with young lasses, for auld silver coins, or cracked tea-spoons.

"Oh!" answered he, very composedly, as if it had been a canister full of black-rappee or blackguard, that he had just lifted down from his top-shelf, "it's just Doctor Blister's saws, whittles, and big knives, in case any of their legs or arms be blown away, that he may cut them off." Little would have prevented me sinking down through the ground, had I not remembered, at the preceese moment, that I myself was a soldier, and liable, when the hour of danger threatened, to be called out, in marching-order, to the field of battle. But by this time the

pistols were in the hands of the two infatuated young men, Mr. Bloatsheet, as fierce as a hussar dragoon, and Magneezhy as supple in the knees as if he was all on oiled hinges; so the next consideration was to get well out of the way, the lookers-on running nearly as great a chance of being shot as the principals, they not being accustomed, like me for instance, to the use of arms; on which account, I scougged myself behind a big pear-tree; both being to fire when Blister gave the word "Off!"

I had hardly jouked into my hidy-hole, when "crack—crack" played the pistols like lightning; and, as soon as I got my cowl taken from my een, and looked about, wae's me, I saw Magneezhy clap his hand to his brow, wheel round like a peerie, or a sheep seized with the sturdie, and then play flap down on his broadside, breaking the necks of half-a-dozen cabbage-stocks,—three of which were afterwards clean lost, as we could not put them all into the pot at one time. The whole of us ran forward, but foremost was Bloatsheet, who, seizing Magneezhy by the hand, said, with a mournful face, "I hope you forgive me? Only say this as long as you have breath; for I am off to Leith harbour in half a minute."

The blood was running over poor Magneezhy's een, and drib-dribbling from the neb of his nose, so he was truly in a pitiful state; but he said with more strength than I thought he could have mustered,—

"Yes, yes, fly for your life. I am dying without much pain—fly for your life, for I am a gone man!"

Bloatsheet bounced through the kail-yard like a maukin, clamb over the bit wa', and off like mad; while Blister was feeling Magneezhy's pulse with one hand, and looking at his doctor's watch, which he had in the other. "Do ye think that the poor lad will live, doctor?" said I to him.

He gave his head a wise shake, and only observed, "I dare say, it will be a hanging business among us. In what direction do you think, Mansie, we should all take flight?"

But I answered bravely, "Flee them that will, I'se flee nane. If I am ta'en prisoner, the town-officers maun take me frae my a'n house; but, nevertheless, I trust the visibility of my innocence will be as plain as a pikestaff to the een of the Fifteen!"

"What then, Mansie, will we do with poor Magneezhy? Give us your advice in need."

"Let us carry him down to my own bed," answered I; "I would not desert a fellow-creature in his dying hour! Help me down with him, and then flee the country as fast as you are able!"

We immediately proceeded, and lifted the poor lad, who had now dwalmed away, upon our wife's hand-barrow—Blister taking the feet, and me the oxters, whereby I got my waistcoat all japanned with blood; so, when we got him laid right, we

proceeded to carry him between us down the close, just as if he had been a sticked sheep, and in at the back door, which cost us some trouble, being narrow, and the barrow getting jammed in ; but, at long and last, we got him streeked out above the blankets, having previously shooken Benjie, and wakened him out of his morning's nap.

All this being accomplished and got over, Blister decamped, leaving me my liefu' lane, excepting Benjie who was next to nobody, in the house with the deeing man. What a frightful face he had, all smeared over with blood and powder—and I really jaloused, that if he died in that room, it would be haunted for ever mair, he being in a manner a murdered man ; so that, even should I be acquitted of art and part, his ghost might still come to bother us, making our house a hell upon earth, and frighting us out of our seven senses." But, in the midst of my dreadful surmises, when all was still, so that you might have heard a pin fall, a knock-knock-knock, came to the door, on which, recovering my senses, I dreaded first that it was the death-chap, and syne that the affair had got wind, and that it was the beagles come in search of me ; so I kissed little Benjie, who was sitting on his creepie, blubbering and greeting for his parritch, while a tear stood in my own ee, as I went forward to lift the sneck to let the offi-cers, as I thought, harrie our house, by carrying off me, its master ; but it was, thank heaven, only Tammie

Bodkin, coming in whistling to his work, with some measuring-papers hanging round his neck.

"Ah, Tammie," said I to him, my heart warming at a kent face, and making the laddie, although my bounden servant by a regular indenture of five years, a friend in my need, "come in, my man. I fear ye'll hae to take charge of the business for some time to come; mind what I tell'd ye about the shaping and the cutting, and no making the guse ower warm; as I doubt I am about to be harled away to the tolbooth."

Tammie's heart swelled to his mouth. "Ah, maister," he said, "yere joking. What should ye have done that ye should be ta'en to sic an ill place?"

"Ay, Tammie, lad," answered I, "it is but ower true."

"Weel, weel," quo' Tammie—I really thought it a great deal of the laddie—"weel, weel, they canna prevent me coming to sew beside ye; and if I can take the measure of customers without, ye can cut the claith within. But what is't for, maister?"

"Come in here," said I to him, "and believe your ain een, Tammie, my man."

"Losh me!" cried the poor laddie, glowring at the bloody face of the man in the bed. "Ay—ay—ay! maister; save us, maister; ay—ay—ay—you have na clowred his harnpan with the guse?

Ay, maister, maister! whaten an unearthly sight!! I doubt they'll hang us a'; you for doing't—and me on suspicion—and Benjie as art and part, puir thing. But I'll rin for a doctor. Will I, maister?"

The thought had never struck me before, being in a sort of a manner dung stupid; but catching up the word, I said with all my pith and birr, "Rin, rin, Tammie, rin for life and death!"

Tammie bolted like a nine-year-old, never looking behind his tail: so, in less than ten minutes, he returned, hauling along old Doctor Peelbox, whom he had waukened out of his bed, by the lug and horn, at the very time I was trying to quiet young Benjie, who was following me up and down the house, as I was pacing to and fro in distraction, girning and whinging for his breakfast.

"Bad business, bad business; bless us, what is this?" said the old Doctor, staring at Magneezhy's bloody face through his silver spectacles—"What's the matter?"

The poor patient knew at once his maister's tongue, and, lifting up one of his eyes, the other being stiff and barkened down, said in a melancholy voice, "Ah, master, do you think I'll get better?"

Doctor Peelbox, old man as he was, started back, as if he had been a French dancing-master, or had stramped on a hot bar of iron. "Tom, Tom, is this you? what, in the name of wonder, has done this?"

Then feeling his wrist—" but your pulse is quite good. Have you fallen, boy? Where is the blood coming from?"

" Somewhere about the hairy scalp," answered Magneezhy, in their own sort of lingo. " I doubt some artery's cut through!"

The Doctor immediately bade him lie quiet and hush, as he was getting a needle and silken thread ready to sew it up; ordering me to have a bason and water ready, to wash the poor lad's physog. I did so as hard as I was able, though I was not sure about the blood just; old Doctor Peelbox watching over my shoulder with a lighted penny candle in one hand and the needle and thread in the other, to see where the blood spouted from. But we were as daft as wise; so he bade me take my big sheers, and cut out all the hair on the fore part of the head as bare as my loof; and syne we washed, and better washed; so Magneezhy got the other ee up, when the barkened blood was loosed; looking, though as pale as a clean shirt, more frighted than hurt; until it became plain to us all, first to the Doctor, syne to me, and syne to Tammie Bodkin, and last of all to Magneezhy himself, that his skin was not so much as peeled. So we helped him out of the bed, and blithe was I to see the lad standing on the floor, without a hold, on his own feet.

I did my best to clean his neckcloth and shirt of the blood, making him look as decentish as possible,

considering circumstances; and lending him, as the scripture commands, my tartan maud to hide the infirmity of his bloody trowsers and waistcoat. Home went he and his master together; me standing at our close mouth, wishing them a good morning, and blithe to see their backs. Indeed, a condemned thief with the rope about his neck, and the white cowl tied over his een, to say nothing of his hands yerked together behind his back, and on the nick of being thrown over, could not have been more thankful for a reprieve than I was, at the same blessed moment. It was like Adam seeing the de'il's rear marching out of Paradise, if one may be allowed to think such a thing.

The whole business, tag, rag, and bob-tail, soon, however, spunked out, and was the town talk for more than one day.—But ye'll hear.

At the first I pitied the poor lads, that I thought had fled for ever and aye from their native country, to Bengal, Seringapatam, Botany Bay, or Jamaica, leaving behind them all their friends and old Scotland, as they might never hear of the goodness of Providence in their behalf. But—wait a wee.

Would you believe it? As sure's death, the whole was but a wicked trick played by that mischievous loon Blister and his cronies, upon one that was a simple and soft-headed callant. De'il a hait was in the one pistol but a pluff of powder; and, in the other, a cartridge paper full of blood was rammed down

upon the charge; the which, hitting Magneezhy on the ee-bree, had caused a business that seemed to have put him out of life, and nearly put me (though one of the volunteers) out of my seven senses.

CHAPTER XVII.

MY FIRST AND LAST PLAY.

Pla. I' faith
I like the audience that frequenteth there
With much applause: a man shall not be chokt
With the stench of garlick, nor be pasted firm
To the barmy jacket of a beer-brewer.
Bra. 'Tis a good gentle audience, and I hope
The boys will come one day in great request
Jack Drum's Entertainment. 1601.

Out cam the gudeman, and laigh he louted;
Out cam the gudewife, and heigh she shouted;
And a' the toun-neibours gathered about it;
And there he lay, I trow.
The Cauldrife Wooer.—Old Song.

The time of Tammie Bodkin's apprenticeship being nearly worn through, it behoved me, as a man attentive to business and the interests of my family, to cast my eyes around me in search of a callant to fill his place, as it is customary in our trade for young men, when their time is out, taking a year's journeymanship in Edinburgh, to perfect them in the more

intricate branches of the business, and learn the newest manner of the French and London fashions, by cutting cloth for the young advocates, the college students, and the rest of the principal tip-top bucks.

Having, though I say it myself, the word of being a canny maister, more than one brought their callants to me, on reading the bill of "An apprentice wanted" pasted on my shop-window.

Offering to bind them for the regular time, yet not wishing to take but one, I thought best not to fix in a hurry, and make choice of him that seemed more exactly cut out for my purpose In the course of a few weeks three or four cast up, among whom was a laddie of Ben Aits, the mealmonger, and a son of William Burlings, the baker; to say little of the callant of Saunders Broom the sweep, that would fain have put his blackit-looking bit creature, with the one ee under my wing; but I aye looked to respectability in these matters; so glad was I when I got the offer of Mungo Glen—But more of this in half-a-minute.

I must say I was glad of any feasible excuse to make to the sweep, to get quit of him and his laddie, the father being a drucken ne'er-do-weel, that I wonder did not fall long ere this time of day from some chimney-head, and get his neck broken: So I told him at long and last, when he came papping into my shop, plaguing me every time he passed, that I had fitted myself; and that there would be

no need of his taking the trouble to call again. Upon which he gave his blacked nieve a desperate thump on the counter, making the observe, that out of respect for him I might have given his son the preference. Though I was a wee puzzled for an answer, I said to him, for want of a better, that having a timber-leg, he could not well creuk his hough to the shop-board for our trade.

"Hout, touts," said Saunders, giving his lips a smack,—"Creuk his hough, ye body, you! Do ye think his timber-leg canna screw off?—That'll no pass."

I was a wee dumbfoundered at this cleverness. So I said, more on my guard,—"True, true, Saunders, but he's ower little."

"Ower little, and be hanged to ye!" cried the disrespectful fellow, wheeling about on his heel, as he grasped the sneck of the shop-door, and gave a girn that showed the only clean parts of his body,—to wit, the whites of his een, and his sharp teeth;—"Ower little!—Pu, pu!—He's like the blackamoor's pig, then, Maister Wauch,—he's like the blackamoor's pig,—he may be ver' leetle, but he be tam ould;" and with this he showed his back, clapping the door at his tail without wishing a good day; and I am scarcely sorry when I confess, that I never cut cloth for either father or son from that hour to this one, the losing of such a customer being no great matter at best, and almost clear gain, compared with

saddling myself with a callant with only one ee and one leg; the one having fallen a victim to the dregs of the measles, and the other having been harled off by a farmer's thrashing-mill. However, I got myself properly suited;—but ye shall hear.

Our neighbour Mrs. Grassie, a widow woman, unco intimate with our wife, and very attentive to Benjie when he had the chincough, had a far-away cousin of the name of Glen, that held out among the howes of the Lammermoor hills,—a distant part of the country, ye observe. Auld Glen, a decent-looking body of a creature, had come in with his sheltie, about some private matters of business—such as the buying of a horse, or something to that effect, where he could best fall in with it, either at our fair, or the Grassmarket, or such like; so he had up-pitting free of expense from Mrs. Grassie, on account of his relationship; Glen being second cousin to Mrs. Grassie's brother's wife, which is deceased. I might, indeed, have mentioned, that our neighbour herself had been twice married, and had the misery of seeing out both her gudemen; but sic was the will of fate, and she bore up with perfect resignation.

Having made a bit warm dinner ready, for she was a tidy body, and knew what was what, she thought she could not do better than ask in a reputable neighbour to help her friend to eat it, and take a cheerer with him; as, maybe, being a stranger

like, he would not like to use the freedom of drinking by himself,—a custom which is at the best an unsocial one,—especially with none but women-folk near him; so she did me the honour to make choice of me—though I say it, who should not say it;—and when we got our jug filled for the second time, and began to grow better acquainted, ye would just wonder to see how we became merry, and cracked away just like two pen-guns. I asked him, ye see, about sheep and cows, and corn and hay, and ploughing and thrashing, and horses and carts, and fallow land, and lambing-time, and ha'rst, and making cheese and butter, and selling eggs, and curing the sturdie, and the snifters, and the batts, and such like;—and he, in his turn, made inquiry regarding broad and narrow cloth, Kilmarnock cowls, worsted comforters, Shetland hose, mittens, leather-caps, stuffing and padding, metal and mule-buttons, thorls, pocket-linings, serge, twist, buckram, shaping and sewing, back-splaying, cloth-runds, goosing the labroad, bodkins, black thread, patent shears, measuring, and all the other particulars belonging to our trade, which he said, at long and last, after we had joked together, was a power better one than the farming.

"Ye should make your son ane then," said I, "if ye think so. Have ye any bairns?"

"Ye've hit the nail on the head.—Od, man, if ye wasna sae far away, I would bind our auldest

callant to yoursell; I'm sae weel pleased wi' yere gentlemany manners. But I'm speaking havers."

"Havers here or havers there, what;" said I, "is to prevent ye boarding him, at a cheap rate, either with our friend Mrs. Grassie, or with the wife? Either of the two would be a sort of mother to him."

"'Deed I daur say would they," answered Maister Glen, stroking his chin, which was gey rough, and had not got a clean since Sunday, having had four days of sheer growth,—our meeting, you will observe by this, being on the Thursday afternoon,—"'Deed would they.—'Od, I maun speak to the mistress about it."

On the head of this we had another jug, three being cannie, after which we were both a wee tozy-mozy; so I dare say Mrs. Grassie saw plainly that we were getting into a state where we would not easily make a halt; so, without letting on, she brought in the tea-things before us, and showed us a play-bill, to tell us that a company of strolling play-actors had come in a body in the morning, with a whole cartful of scenery and grand dresses; and were to make an exhibition at seven o'clock, at the ransom of a shilling a-head, in Laird Wheatley's barn.

Many a time and often had I heard of play-acting; and of players making themselves kings and queens, and saying a great many wonderful things; but I had never before an opportunity of making myself

a witness to the truth of these hearsays. So Maister Glen, being as full of nonsense, and as fain to have his curiosity gratified as myself, we took upon us the stout resolution to go out together, he offering to treat me; and I determined to run the risk of Maister Wiggie, our minister's rebuke, for the transgression, hoping it would make no lasting impression on his mind, being for the first and only time. Folks should not on all occasions be over scrupulous.

After paying our money at the door, never, while I live and breathe, will I forget what we saw and heard that night; it just looks to me, by all the world, when I think on it, like a fairy dream. The place was crowded to the ee; Maister Glen and me having nearly got our ribs dung in before we found a seat, and they behind were obliged to mount the back benches to get a sight. Right to the fore-hand of us was a large green curtain, some five or six ells wide, a good deal the worse of the wear, having seen service through two three summers; and, just in the front of it, were eight or ten penny candles stuck in a board fastened to the ground, to let us see the players' feet like, when they came on the stage,—and even before they came on the stage,—for the curtain being scrimpit in length, we saw legs and feet moving behind the scenes very neatly; while two blind fiddlers they had brought with them, played the bonniest ye ever heard. 'Od, the very music was worth a sixpence of itself.

The place, as I said before, was choke-full, just to excess; so that one could scarcely breathe. Indeed I never saw any part so crowded, not even at a tent-preaching, when Mr. Roarer was giving his discourses on the building of Solomon's Temple. We were obligated to have the windows opened for a mouthful of fresh air, the barn being as close as a baker's oven, my neighbour and me fanning our red faces with our hats, to keep us cool; and, though all were half stewed, we had the worst of it, the toddy we had taken having fermented the blood of our bodies into a perfect fever.

Just at the time that the two blind fiddlers were playing the Downfal of Paris, a handbell rang, and up goes the green curtain; being hauled to the ceiling, as I observed with the tail of my ee, by a birkie at the side, that had hold of a rope. So, on the music stopping and all becoming as still as that you might have heard a pin fall, in comes a decent old gentleman at his leisure, well powdered, with an old fashioned coat on, waistcoat with flap-pockets, brown breeches with buckles at the knees, and silk stockings with red gushats on a blue ground. I never saw a man in such distress; he stamped about, and better stamped about, dadding the end of his staff on the ground, and imploring all the powers of heaven and earth to help him to find out his run-away daughter, that had decamped with some ne'er-do-weel loon of a half-pay captain, that keppit her in his

arms from her bedroom-window, up two pair of stairs.

Every father and head of a family must have felt for a man in his situation, thus to be robbed of his dear bairn, and an only daughter too, as he told us over and over again, as the salt salt tears ran gushing down his withered face, and he aye blew his nose on his clean calendered pocket napkin. But, ye ken, the thing was absurd to suppose that we should know anything about the matter, having never seen either him or his daughter between the een before, and not kenning them by headmark; so, though we sympathized with him, as folks ought to do with a fellow-creature in affliction, we thought it best to hold our tongues, to see what might cast up better than he expected. So out he went stumping at the other side, determined, he said, to find them out, though he should follow them to the world's end, Johnny Groat's House, or something to that effect.

Hardly was his back turned, and almost before ye could cry Jack Robison, in comes the birkie and the very young lady the old gentleman described, arm-and-arm together, smoodging and laughing like daft. Dog on it! it was a shameless piece of business. As true as death, before all the crowd of folk, he put his arm round her waist, and called her his sweetheart, and love, and dearie, and darling, and everything that is fine. If they had been courting

in a closs together on a Friday night, they could not have said more to one another, or gone greater lengths. I thought such shame to be an eye-witness to sic on-goings, that I was obliged at last to hold up my hat before my face, and look down; though, for all that, the young lad, to be such a blackguard as his conduct showed, was well enough faured, and had a good coat to his back, with double gilt buttons, and fashionable lapells, to say little of a very well-made pair of buckskins, a little the worse of the wear to be sure, but which, if they had been well cleaned, would have looked almost as good as new. How they had come we never could learn, as we neither saw chaise nor gig; but, from his having spurs on his boots, it is more than likely that they had lighted at the back-door of the barn from a horse, she riding on a pad behind him maybe, with her hand round his waist.

The father looked to be a rich old bool, both from his manner of speaking, and the rewards he seemed to offer for the apprehension of his daughter; but, to be sure, when so many of us were present that had an equal right to the spulzie, it would not be a great deal a thousand pounds when divided, still it was worth the looking after; so we just bidit a wee.

Things were brought to a bearing, howsoever, sooner than either themselves, I dare say, or anybody else present, seemed to have the least glimpse

of; for, just in the middle of their fine goings-on, the sound of a coming foot was heard, and the lassie, taking guilt to her, cried out, " Hide me, hide me, for the sake of goodness, for yonder comes my old father !"

No sooner said than done. In he stappit her into a closet; and, after shutting the door on her, he sat down upon a chair, pretending to be asleep in a moment. The old father came bouncing in, and seeing the fellow as sound as a top, he ran forward and gied him such a shake, as if he would have shooken him all sundry; which soon made him open his een as fast as he had steeked them. After blackguarding the chield at no allowance, cursing him up hill and down dale, and calling him every name but a gentleman, he held his staff over his crown, and gripping him by the cuff of the neck, asked him what he had made of his daughter. Never since I was born did I ever see such brazen-faced impudence! The rascal had the brass to say at once, that he had not seen word of wittens of the lassie for a month, though more than a hundred folk sitting in his company had seen him dauting her with his arm round her jimpy waist, not five minutes before. As a man, as a father, as an elder of our kirk, my corruption was raised, for I aye hated lying, as a poor cowardly sin, and an inbreak on the ten commandments; and I found my nei'bour, Mr. Glen, fidgetting on the seat as well as me; so I

thought, that whoever spoke first, would have the best right to be entitled to the reward; whereupon, just as he was in the act of rising up, I took the word out of his mouth, saying, "Dinna believe him, auld gentleman—dinna believe him, friend; he's telling a parcel of lees. Never saw her for a month! It's no worth arguing, or calling witnesses; just open that press-door, and ye'll see whether I'm speaking truth or not."

The old man stared, and looked dumfoundered; and the young man, instead of running forward with his double nieves to strike me, the only thing I was feared for, began a laughing, as if I had done him a good turn. But never since I had a being, did I ever witness such an uproar and noise as immediately took place. The whole house was so glad that the scoundrel had been exposed, that they set up siccan a roar of laughter, and thumped away at siccan a rate at the boards with their feet, that at long and last, with pushing and fidgetting, and holding their sides, down fell the place they call the gallery; all the folk in't being hurl'd topsy-turvy, head foremost among the saw-dust on the floor below; their guffawing soon being turned to howling, each one crying louder than another at the top note of their voices, "Murder! murder! haud aff me; murder! my ribs are in; murder! I'm killed—I'm speechless!" and other lamentations to that effect; so that a rush to the door took place, in which

everything was overturned—the door-keeper being wheeled away like wildfire—the furms stramped to pieces—the lights knocked out—and the two blind fiddlers dung head foremost over the stage, the bass fiddle cracking like thunder at every bruise. Such tearing, and swearing, and tumbling, and squeeling, was never witnessed in the memory of man, since the building of Babel: legs being likely to be broken, sides staved in, eyes knocked out, and lives lost; there being only one door, and that a small one; so that, when we had been carried off our feet that length, my wind was fairly gone, and a sick dwalm came over me, lights of all manner of colours, red, blue, green, and orange, dancing before me, that entirely deprived me of common sense; till, on opening my eyes in the dark, I found myself leaning with my broadside against the wall on the opposite side of the closs. It was some time before I minded what had happened; so, dreading skaith, I found first the one arm, and then the other, to see if they were broken—syne my head—and syne both of my legs; but all as well as I could discover, was skin-whole and scart-free. On perceiving this, my joy was without bounds, having a great notion that I had been killed on the spot. So I reached round my hand, very thankfully, to take out my pocket-napkin, to give my brow a wipe, when lo and behold the tail of my Sunday's coat was fairly off and away, docked by the haunch buttons.

So much for plays and play-actors—the first and last, I trust in grace, that I shall ever see. But indeed I could expect no better, after the warning that Maister Wiggie had more than once given us from the pulpit on the subject; so, instead of getting my grand reward for finding the old man's daughter, the whole covey of them, no better than a set of swindlers, took leg-bail, and made that very night a moonlight flitting; and Johnny Hammer, honest man, that had wrought from sunrise to sunset, for two days, fitting up their place by contract, instead of being well paid for his trouble, as he deserved, got nothing left him but a ruckle of his own good deals, all dung to shivers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BARLEY-FEVER—AND REBUKE.

> Sages their solemn een may steek,
> And raise a philosophic reek,
> And, physically, causes seek,
> In clime and season;
> But tell me *Whisky's* name in Greek,
> I'll tell the reason.
>
> BURNS.

On the morning after the business of the playhouse happened, I had to take my breakfast in my bed, a thing very uncommon to me, being generally up by cock-craw, except on Sunday mornings whiles, when each one, according to the bidding of the Fourth Commandment, has a license to do as he likes; having a desperate sore head, and a squeamishness at the stomach, occasioned, I jalouse, in a great measure, from what Mr. Glen and me had discussed at Widow Grassie's, in the shape of warm toddy, over our cracks concerning what is called the agricultural and manufacturing interests. So our wife, poor body,

put a thimbleful of brandy, Thomas Mixem's real, into my first cup of tea, which had a wonderful virtue in putting all things to rights; so that I was up and had shaped a pair of lady's corsets, an article in which I sometimes dealt, before ten o'clock, though the morning being rather cold, I did not dispense with my Kilmarnock.

At eleven in the forenoon, or thereabouts, maybe five minutes before or after, but no matter, in comes my crony Maister Glen, rather dazed-like about the een; and with a large piece of white sticking-plaister, about half a nail wide, across one of his cheeks, and over the brig of his nose; giving him a wauf, outlandish, and rather blackguard sort of appearance; so that I was a thought uneasy at what nei'bours might surmise concerning our intimacy; but the honest man accounted for the thing in a very feasible manner, from the falling down on that side of his head of one of the brass candlesticks, while he was lying on his broadside, before one of the furms in the stramash.

His purpose of calling was to tell me, that he could not leave the town without looking in upon me to bid me farewell; more betoken, as he intended sending in his son Mungo by the carrier for trial, to see how the line of life pleased him, and how I thought he would answer,—a thing which I was glad came from his side of the house, being likely to be in the upshot the best for both parties. Yet I

thought he would find our way of doing so canny and comfortable, that it was not very likely he could ever start objections; and I must confess, that I looked forward with no small degree of pride, seeing the probability of my soon having the son of a Lammermuir farmer sitting cross-legged, cheek for jowl with me on the board, and bound to serve me at all lawful times, by night and day, by a regular indenture of five years. Maister Glen insisted on the laddie having a three months' trial; and then, after a wee show of standing out, just to make him aware that I could be elsewhere fitted if I had a mind, I agreed that the request was reasonable, and that I had no earthly objections to conforming with it. So after giving him his meridian, and a bite of shortbread, we shook hands, and parted in the understanding, that his son would arrive on the top of limping Jamie the carrier's cart, in the course, say of a fortnight.

Through the whole of the forepart of the day, I remained rather queerish, as if something was working about my inwards, and a droll pain between my een. The wife saw the case I was in, and advised me, for the sake of the fresh air, to take a step into the bit garden, and try a hand at the spade, the smell of the new earth being likely to operate as a cordial; but no—it would not do; and when I came in at one o'clock to my dinner, the steam of the fresh broth, instead of making me feel as usual as hungry

as a hawk, was like to turn my stomach, while the sight of the sheep's head, one of the primest ones I had seen the whole season, made me as sick as a dog; so I could do nothing but take a turn out again, and swig away at the small beer, that never seemed able to slocken my drouth. At long and last, I minded having heard Andrew Redbeak, the excise-officer, say, that nothing ever put him right after a debosh, except something they call a bottle of soda-water; so my wife despatched Benjie to the place where we knew it could be found, and he returned in a jiffie with a thing like a blacking-bottle below his daidly, as he was bidden. There being a wire over the cork, for some purpose or other, or maybe just to look neat, we had some fight to get it torn away, but at last we succeeded. I had turned about for a jug, and the wife was rummaging for the screw, while Benjie was fiddling away with his fingers at the cork—Save us! all at once it gave a thud like thunder, driving the cork over poor Benjie's head, while it spouted up in his een like a fire-engine, and I had only just time to throw down the jug, and up with the bottle to my mouth. Luckily, for the sixpence it cost, there was a drop left, which tasted, by all the world, just like brisk dish-washings; but for all that, it had a wonderful power of setting me to rights; and my noddle in a while began to clear up, like a March-day after a heavy shower.

I mind very well too, on the afternoon of the 'di-

vidual same day, that my door-neighbour, Thomas Burlings, popped in; and, in our two-handed crack over the counter, after asking me in a dry, curious way, if I had come by no skaith in the business of the play, he said, the thing had now spread far and wide, and was making a great noise in the world. I thought the body a wee sharp in his observes; so I pretended to take it quite lightly, proceeding in my shaping-out a pair of buckskin breeches, which I was making for one of the Duke's huntsmen; so, seeing he was off the scent, he said, in a more jocose way—

"Well, speaking about buckskins, I'll tell ye a guid story about that."

"Let us hear't," said I; for I was in that sort of queerish way, that I did not care much about being very busy.

"Ye'se get it as I heard it," quo' Thomas; "and it's no less worth telling, that it bears a good moral application in its tail; after the same fashion that a blister does good by sucking away the vicious humours of the body, thereby making the very pain it gives precious." And here—though maybe it was just my thought—the body stroked his chin, and gave me a kind of half gley, as much as saying, "take that to ye, nei'bour." But I deserved it all, and could not take it ill off his hand, being, like myself, one of the elders of our kirk, and an honest enough, precise-speaking man.

"Ye see, ye ken," said Thomas, "that the Breadalbane Fencibles, a wheen Highland birkies, were put into camp at Fisherrow links, maybe for the benefit of their douking, on account of the fiddle*—or maybe in case the French should land at the water-mouth—or maybe to give the regiment the benefit of the sea air—or maybe to make their bare houghs hardier, for it was the winter time, frost and snaw being as plenty as ye like, and no sae scarce as pantaloons among the core—or for some ither reason, guid, bad, or indifferent, which disna muckle matter; but ye see the lang and the short o' the story is, that there they were encamped, man and mother's son of them, going through their dreels by day, and sleeping by night—the privates in their tents, and the offishers in their marquees, living in the course of nature on their usual rations of beef, and tammies, and so on. So, ye understand me, there was nae such smart ordering of things in the army in those days, the men not having the beef served out to them by a butcher, supplying each company or companies by a written contract, drawn up between him and the paymaster before 'sponsible witnesses; but ilka ane bringing what pleased him, either tripe, trotters, steaks, cows-cheek, pluck, hough, spar-rib, jigget, or so forth."

* See Dr. Jamieson.—P. D.

"'Od!" said I, "Thomas, ye crack like a minister. Where did ye happen to pick up all that knowledge?"

"Where should I have got it, but from an auld half-pay sergeant-major, that lived in our spare room, and had been out in the American war, having seen a power of service, and been twice wounded, once in the aff-cuit, and the other time in the cuff of the neck."

"I thought as muckle," said I—"Weel, say on, man, it's unco entertaining."

"Weel," continued he, "let me see where I was at when ye stoppit me; for maybe I'll hae to begin at the beginning again. For gif ye yenterrupt me, or edge in a word, or put me out by asking questions, I lose the thread of my discourse, and canna proceed."

"Ou, let me see," said I, "ye was about the contract concerning the beef."

"Preceesely," quo' Thomas, stretching out his fore-finger, "ye've said it to a hair. At that time, as I was observing, the butcher didna supply a company or companies, according to the terms of a contract, drawn up before 'sponsible witnesses, between him and the paymaster; but the soldiers got beef-money along with their pay; with which said money, given them, ye observe, for said purpose, they were bound and obligated, in terms of the statute, to buy, purchase, and provide the said beef, twice a-week or oftener, as it might happen; an orderly offisher mak-

ing inspection of the camp-kettles regularly every forenoon at one o'clock or thereabouts.

"So, as ye'll pay attention to observe, there was a private in Captain M'Tavish's company, the second to the left of the centre, of the name of Duncan MacAlpine, a wee, hardy, blackaviced, in-knee'd creature, remarkable for naething that ever I heard tell of, except being reported to have shotten a gauger in Badenough, or thereabouts; and for having a desperate red nose, the effects, ye observe, of drinking spirituous liquors; ye observe, I daur say, the effects of drinking malt speerits.

"Weel, week after week passed ower, and better passed ower, and Duncan played aff his tricks, like anither Herman Boaz, the slight-o'-hand juggler, him that's suspeckit to be in league and paction with the de'il. But ye'll hear."

"'Od, it's diverting, Thomas," said I to him, "gang on, man."

"Weel, ye see, as I was observing. Let me see, where was I at?—Ou ay, having a paction with the de'il. So, when all were watching beside the camp-kettles, some stirring them with spurtles, or parritch-sticks, or forks, or whatever was necessary, the orderly offisher made a point and practice of regularly coming bye, about the chap of one past meridian, as I observed to ye before, to make inspection of what ilka ane had wared his pay on, and what he had got simmering in the het water for his dinner.

for never since I was born, did I ever see before boiled tripe with buttons and button-holes intill't."

At this I set up a loud laughing, which I could not help, though it was like to split my sides; but Thomas Burlings bade me whisht till I heard him out.

"'Buttons and button-holes!' quo' Duncan MacAlpine. 'Look again, wi' yere specs; for yere surely wrang, Lovetenant Todrick.'

"'Buttons and button-holes! and 'deed I am surely right, Duncan,' answered the Lovetenant Todrick, taking his specs deliberately off the brig o' his nose, and faulding them thegither, as he put them first into his morocco case, and syne into his pocket.—'Howsomever, Duncan MacAlpine, I'll pass ye ower for this time, gif ye take my warning, and for the future, ware your pay-money on wholesome butcher's meat, like a Christian, and no be trying to delude your ain stamick, and your offisher's een, by holding up, on a fork, such a heathenish mak-up for a dish, as the leg of a pair o' buckskin breeches!"

"Buckskin breeches!" said I; "and did he really and actually boil siccan trash to his dinner?"

"Nae sae far south as that yet, friend," answered Thomas. "Duncan was not so bowed in the intellect as ye imagine, and had some spice of cleverality about his queer manœuvres.—Eat siccan trash to his dinner! Nae mair, Mansie, than ye intend to

eat that iron guse ye're rinning along that piece claith; but he wanted to make his offishers believe that his pay gaed the right way: like the Pharisees of old that keepit praying, in ell-lang faces, about the corners of the streets, and gaed hame wi' hearts full of wickedness and a' manner of cheatrie."

"And what way did his pay gang then?" asked I; "and how did he live?"

"I telled ye before, frien," answered Thomas, "that he was a deboched creature; and, like ower mony in the world, likit weel what didna do him ony good. It's a wearyfu' thing that whisky. I wish it could be banished to Botany Bay."

"It is that," said I. "Muckle and nae little sin does it breed and produce in this world."

"I'm glad," quoth Thomas, stroking down his chin in a slee way, "I'm glad the guilty should see the folly o' their ain ways: it's the first step, ye ken, till amendment;—and indeed I tell't Maister Wiggie, when he sent me here, that I could almost become guid for your being mair wary of your conduct for the future time to come."

This was like a thunder-clap to me, and I did not know, for a jiffie, what to feel, think, or do, more than perceiving that it was a piece of devilish cruelty on their parts, taking things on this strict. As for myself, I could freely take sacred oath on the Book, that I had not had a dram in my head for four months before; the knowledge of which made my

corruption rise like lightning, as a man is aye brave when he is innocent; so, giving my pow a bit scart, I said briskly, "So ye're after some session business in this visit, are ye?"

"Ye've just guessed it," answered Thomas Burlings, sleeking down his front hair with his fingers, in a sober way; "We had a meeting this forenoon; and it was resolved ye should stand a public rebuke in the meeting-house, on Sunday next."

"Hang me, if I do!" answered I, thumping my nieve down with all my might on the counter, and throwing back my cowl behind m into a corner. "No, man!" added I, snapping with great pith my finger and thumb in Thomas's een, "no for all the ministers and elders that ever were cleckit. They may do their best; and ye may tell them so, if ye like. I was born a free man; I live in a free country; I am the subject of a free king and constitution; and I'll be shot before I submit to such rank diabolical papistry."

"Hooly and fairly," quoth Thomas, staring a wee astonished like, . not a little surprised to see my birse up in this manner; for, when he thought upon shearing a lamb, he found he had catched a tartar; so, calming down as fast as ye like, he said, "Hooly and fairly, Mansie," (or Maister Wauch, I believe, he did me the honour to call me,) "they'll maybe no be sae hard as they threaten. But ye ken, my friend, I'm speaking to ye as a brither; it was an

unco-like business for an elder, not only to gang till a play, which is ane of the deevil's rendevouses, but to gang there in a state of liquor; making yoursell a world's wonder—and you an elder of our kirk!! I put the question to yourself, soberly?"

His threatening I could despise, and could have fought, cuffed, and kicked with all the ministers and elders of the General Assembly, to say nothing of the Relief Synod, and the Burgher Union, before I would have demeaned myself to yield to what my inward spirit plainly told me to be rank cruelty and injustice; but ah! his calm, brotherly, flattering way I could not thole with, and the tears came rapping into my een, faster than it cared my manhood to let be seen; so I said till him, "Weel, weel, Thomas, I ken I have done wrong; and I am sorry for't: they'll never find me in siccan a scrape again."

Thomas Burlings then came forward in a friendly way, and shook hands with me; telling that he would go back and plead before them in my behalf. He said this over again, as we parted, at my shop door; and, to do him justice, surely he had not been worse than his word, for I have aye attended the kirk as usual, standing, when it came to my rotation, at the plate, and nobody, gentle or semple, ever spoke to me on the subject of the play-house, or minted the matter of the Rebuke from that day to this.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE AWFUL NIGHT.

Ha!—'twas but a dream;
But then so terrible, it shakes my soul!
Cold drops of sweat hang on my trembling flesh;
My blood grows chilly, and I freeze with horror.

Richard the Third.

The fire king one day rather amorous felt;
He mounted his hot copper filly;
His breeches and boots were of tin, and the belt
Was made of cast-iron, for fear it should melt
With the heat of the copper colt's belly.

Oh! then there was glitter and fire in each eye,
For two living coals were the symbols;
His teeth were calcined, and his tongue was so dry,
It rattled against them as though you should try
To play the piano in thimbles.

Rejected Addresses.

In the course of a fortnight from the time I parted with Maister Glen, the Lauder carrier, limping Jamie, brought his callant to our shop-door in his hand. He was a tall, slender laddie, some fourteen years old, and sore grown away from his claes. There,

was something genty and delicate-like about him, having a pale sharp face, blue een, a nose like a hawk's, and long yellow hair hanging about his haffets, as if barbers were unco scarce cattle among the howes of the Lammermuir hills. Having a general experience of human nature, I saw that I would have something to do towards bringing him into a state of rational civilization; but, considering his opportunities he had been well educated, and I liked his appearance on the whole not that ill.

To divert him a while, as I did not intend yoking him to work the first day, I sent out Benjie with him, after giving him some refreshment of bread and milk, to let him see the town, and all the uncos about it. I told Benjie first to take him to the auld kirk, which is one wonderful ancient building; and as for mason-work, far before anything to be seen or heard tell of in our day,—syne to Lugton brig, which is one grand affair, hanging over the muckle water like a rainbow—syne to the Tolbooth, which is a terror to evil-doers, and from which the Lord preserve us all! —syne to the Market, where ye'll see lamb, beef, mutton, and veal, hanging up on cleeks, in roasting and boiling pieces—spar-rib, jigget, shoulder, and heuk-bane, in the greatest prodigality of abundance; —and syne down to the Duke's gate, by looking through the bonny white-painted iron stanchels of which ye'll see the deer running beneath the green trees; and the palace itself, in the inside of which

dwells one that needs not be proud to call the king his cousin.

Brawly did I ken, that it is a wee after a laddie's being loosed from his mother's apron string, and hurried from home, till the mind can make itself up to stay among fremit folk; or that the attention can be roused to anything said, or done, however simple in the uptake. So after Benjie brought Mungo home again, gey forfaughten and wearied-out like, I bade the wife give him his four-hours, and told him he might go to his bed as soon as he liked. Jalousing also, at the same time, that creatures brought up in the country have strange notions about them with respect to supernaturals—such as ghaists, brownies, fairies, and bogles—to say nothing of witches, warlocks, and evil spirits, I made Benjie take off his claes and lie down beside him, as I said, to keep him warm; but, in plain matter of fact (between friends), that the callant might sleep sounder, finding himself in a strange bed, and not very sure as to how the house stood as to the matter of a good name.

Kenning by my own common sense, and from long experience of the ways of a wicked world, that there is nothing like industry, I went to Mungo's bedside in the morning, and wakened him betimes. Indeed I'm leeing there—I need not call it wakening him—for Benjie told me, when he was supping his parritch out of his luggie at breakfast-time, that he

never winked an ee all night, and that sometimes he heard him greeting to himself in the dark—such and so powerful is our love of home, and the force of natural affection. Howsoever, as I was saying, I took him ben the house with me, down to the workshop, where I had begun to cut out a pair of nankeen trowsers for a young lad, that was to be married the week after to a servant-maid of Maister Wiggie's,—a trig quean, that afterwards made him a good wife, and the father of a numerous small family.

Speaking of nankeen, I would advise every one, as a friend, to buy the Indian, and not the British kind—the expense of outlay being ill-hained, even at sixpence a-yard—the latter not standing the washing, but making a man's legs, at a distance, look like a yellow yorline.

It behoved me now as a maister, bent on the improvement of his 'prentice, to commence learning Mungo some few of the mysteries of our trade; so having showed him the way to crook his hough, (example is better than precept, as James Batter observes,) I taught him the plan of holding the needle; and having fitted his middle-finger with a bottomless thimble of our own sort, I set him to sewing the cotton-lining into one leg, knowing that it was a part not very particular, and not very likely to be seen; so that the matter was not great, whether the stitching was exactly regular, or rather in the zig-

zag line. As is customary with all new beginners, he made a desperate awkward hand at it, and of which I would of course have said nothing, but that he chanced to brog his thumb, and completely soiled the whole piece of work with the stains of blood; which, for one thing, could not wash out without being seen; and, for another, was an unlucky omen to happen to a marriage garment.

Every man should be on his guard. This was a lesson I learned when I was in the volunteers, at the time Bonaparte was expected to land down at Dunbar. Luckily for me in this case, I had, by some foolish mistake or another, made an allowance of a half-yard, over and above what I found I could manage to shape on; so I boldly made up my mind to cut out the piece altogether, it being in the back seam. In that business I trust I showed the art of a good tradesman, having managed to do it so neatly, that it could not be noticed without the narrowest inspection; and having the advantage of a covering by the coat-flaps, had indeed no chance of being so, except on desperate-windy days.

On the day succeeding that on which this unlucky mischance happened, an accident almost as bad befell, though not to me, farther than that every one is bound, by the Ten Commandments, to say nothing of his own conscience, to take a part in the afflictions that befall their door-nei'bours.

When the voice of man was wheisht, and all was

sunk in the sound sleep of midnight, it chanced that I was busy dreaming that I was sitting one of the spectators, looking at another play-acting piece of business. Before coming this length, howsoever, I should by right have observed, that before going to bed, I had eaten for my supper part of a black pudding, and two sausages, that widow Grassie had sent in a compliment to my wife, being a genteel woman, and mindful of her friends—so that I must have had some sort of night-mare, and not been exactly in my seven senses—else I could not have been even dreaming of siccan a place. Well, as I was saying, in the playhouse I thought I was; and, all at once, I heard Maister Wiggie, like one crying in the wilderness, hallooing with a loud voice through the window, bidding me flee from the snares, traps, and gin-nets of the Evil One; and from the terrors of the wrath to come. I was in a terrible funk; and just as I was trying to rise from the seat, that seemed somehow glued to my body, and would not let me, to reach down my hat, which, with its glazed cover, was hanging on a pin to one side, my face all red, and glowing like a fiery furnace, for shame of being a second time caught in deadly sin, I heard the kirk-bell jow-jowing, as if it was the last trump summoning sinners to their long and black account; and Maister Wiggie thrust in his arm in his desperation, in a whirlwind of passion, claughting hold of my hand like a vice, to drag me out

head-foremost. Even in my sleep, howsoever, it appears that I like free-will, and ken that there are no slaves in our blessed country; so I tried with all my might to pull against him, and gave his arm such a drive back, that he seemed to bleach over on his side, and raised a hullaballoo of a yell, that not only wakened me, but made me start upright in my bed.

For all the world such a scene! My wife was roaring, "Murder, murder!—Mansie Wauch, will ye no wauken?—Murder, murder! ye've felled me wi' ye're nieve,—ye've felled me outright,—I'm gone for evermair,—my haill teeth are doun my throat. Will ye no wauken, Mansie Wauch?—will ye no wauken?—Murder, murder!—I say murder, murder, murder, murder!!!"

"Wha's murdering us?" cried I, throwing my cowl back on the pillow, and rubbing my een in the hurry of a tremendous fright.—"Wha's murdering us?—where's the robbers?—send for the town-officer!!"

"Oh, Mansie!—oh, Mansie!" said Nanse, in a kind of greeting tone, "I daursay ye've felled me—but nae matter, now I've gotten ye roused. Do ye no see the haill street in a bleeze of flames? Bad is the best; we maun either be burned to death, or out of house and hall, without a rag to cover our nakedness. Where's my son?—where's my dear bairn, Benjie?"

In a most awful consternation, I jumped at this out to the middle of the floor, hearing the causeway all in an uproar of voices; and seeing the flichtering of the flames glancing on the houses in the opposite side of the street, aff the windows of which were filled with the heads of half-naked folks, in round-eared mutches, or Kilmarnocks; their mouths open, and their een staring with fright; while the sound of the fire-engine, rattling through the streets like thunder, seemed like the dead-cart of the plague, come to hurry away the corpses of the deceased, for interment in the kirk-yard.

Never such a spectacle was witnessed since the creation of Adam. I pulled up the window, and looked out—and lo, and behold! the very next house to our own was all in a low from cellar to garret; the burning joists hissing and cracking like mad; and the very wind that blew along, as warm as if it had been out of the mouth of a baker's oven!!

It was a most awful spectacle! mair by token to me, who was likely to be intimately concerned with it; and, beating my brow with my clenched nieve, like a distracted creature, I saw that the labour of my whole life was likely to go for nought, and me to be a ruined man; all the earnings of my industry being laid out on my stock in trade, and on the plenishing of our bit house. The darkness of the latter days came over my spirit like a vision before the prophet Isaiah; and I could see nothing in the years to

come but beggary and starvation; myself a fallen-back old man, with an out-at-the-elbows coat, a greasy hat, and a bell pow, hirpling over a staff, re-queeshting an awmous—Nanse a broken-hearted beggar wife, torn down to tatters, and weeping like Rachel when she thought on better days; and poor wee Benjie going from door to door with a meal-pock on his back.

The thought first dung me stupid, and then drove me to desperation; and not even minding the dear wife of my bosom, that had fainted away as dead as a herring, I pulled on my trowsers like mad, and rushed out into the street, bareheaded and barefoot as the day that Lucky Bringthereout brought me into the world.

The crowd saw, in the twinkling of an eyeball, that I was a desperate man, fierce as Sir William Wallace, and not to be withstood by gentle or semple. So most of them made way for me; they that tried to stop me finding it a bad job, being heeled over from right to left, on the broad of their backs, like flounders, without respect of age or person; some old women, that were obstrapulous, being gey sore hurt, and one of them with a pain in her hainch even to this day. When I had got almost to the door-cheek of the burning house, I found one grupping me by the back like grim death; and, in looking over my shoulder, who was it but Nanse herself, that, rising up from her faint, had pursued me like

a whirlwind. It was a heavy trial, but my duty to myself in the first place, and to my nei'bours in the second, roused me up to withstand it; so, making a spend like a greyhound, I left the hindside of my shirt in her grasp, like Joseph's garment in the nieve of Potiphar's wife; and up the stairs head-foremost among the flames.

Mercy keep us a'! what a sight for mortal man to glowr at with his living een. The bells were tolling amid the dark, like a summons from above for the parish of Dalkeith to pack off to another world; the drums were beat-beating as if the French were coming, thousand on thousand, to kill, slay, and devour every maid and mother's son of us; the fire-engine pump-pump-pumping like daft, showering the water like rainbows, as if the windows of Heaven were opened, and the days of old Noah come back again; and the rabble throwing the good furniture over the windows like ingan peelings, where it either felled the folk below, or was dung to a thousand shivers on the causeway. I cried to them, for the love of goodness, to make search in the beds, in case there might be ony weans there, human life being still more precious than human means; but not a living soul was seen but a cat, which, being raised and wild with the din, would on no consideration allow itself to be catched. Jacob Dribble found that to his cost; for, right or wrong, having a drappie in his head, he swore like a trooper that he would catch

her, and carry her down aneath his oxter; so forward he weired her into a corner, croutching on his hunkers. He had much better have let it alone; for it fuffed over his shoulder like wildfire, and scarting his back all the way down, jumped like a lamplighter head-foremost through the flames, where, in the raging and roaring of the devouring element, its pitiful cries were soon hushed to silence for ever and ever, Amen!

At long and last, a woman's cry was heard on the street, lamenting, like Hagar over young Ishmael in the wilderness of Beersheba, and crying that her old grannie, that was a lamiter, and had been bedridden for four years come the Martinmas following, was burning to a cinder in the fore-garret. My heart was like to burst within me, when I heard this dismal news, remembering that I myself had once an old mother, that was now in the mools; so I brushed up the stair like a hatter, and burst open the door of the fore-garret,—for in the hurry I could not find the sneck, and did not like to stand on ceremony. I could not see my finger before me, and did not ken my right hand from my left, for the smoke; but I groped round and round, though the reek mostly cut my breath, and made me cough at no allowance, till at last I catched hold of something cold and clammy, which I gave a pull, not knowing what it was, but found out to be the old wife's nose. I cried out as loud as I was able for the poor creature to hoize her-

self up into my arms; but, receiving no answer, I perceived in a moment that she was suffocated, the foul air having gone down her wrong hause; and, though I had aye a terror at looking at, far less handling a dead corpse, there was something brave within me at the moment, my blood being up; so I caught hold of her by the shouthers, and harling her with all my might out of her bed, got her lifted on my back, heads and thraws, in the manner of a boll of meal, and away as fast as my legs could carry me.

There was a providence in this haste; for, ere I was half way down the stair, the floor fell with a thud like thunder; and such a combustion of soot, stour, and sparks arose, as was never seen or heard tell of in the memory of man, since the day that Sampson pulled over the pillars in the house of Dagon, and smoored all the mocking Philistines as flat as flounders. For the space of a minute, I was as blind as a beetle, and was like to be choked for want of breath; however, as the dust began to clear up, I saw an open window, and hallooed down to the crowd for the sake of mercy to bring a ladder, to save the lives of two perishing fellow-creatures, for now my own was also in imminent jeopardy. They were long of coming, and I did not ken what to do; so thinking that the old wife, as she had not spoken, was maybe dead already, I was once determined just to let her drop down upon the street; but I knew

that the so doing would have cracked every bone in her body, and the glory of my bravery would thus have been worse than lost. I persevered, therefore, though I was fit to fall down under the dead weight, she not being able to help herself, and having a deal of beef in her skin for an old woman of eighty; but I got a lean, by squeezing her a wee, between me and the wall.

I thought they would never have come, for my shoeless feet were all bruised, and blooding from the crunched lime and the splinters of broken stones; but, at long and last, a ladder was hoisted up, and having fastened a kinch of ropes beneath her oxters, I let her slide down over the upper step, by way of a pillyshee, having the satisfaction of seeing her safely landed in the arms of seven auld wives, that were waiting with a cosey warm blanket below. Having accomplished this grand manœuvre, wherein I succeeded in saving the precious life of a woman of eighty, that had been four long years bedridden, I tripped down the steps myself like a nine-year-old, and had the pleasure when the roof fell in, to ken, that I for one, had done my duty; and that to the best of my knowledge, no living creature, except the poor cat, had perished within the jaws of the devouring element.

But, bide a wee; the work was, as yet, only half done. The fire was still roaring and raging, every puff of wind that blew through the black firmament,

driving the red sparks high into the air, where they died away like the tail of a comet, or the train of a skyrocket; the joisting, crazing, cracking, and tumbling down; and now and then the bursting cans, playing flee in a hundred flinders from the chimney-heads. One would have naturally enough thought that our engine could have drowned out a fire of ony kind whatsoever, in half a second, scores of folks driving about with pitcherfulls of water, and scaling half of it on one another and the causeway in their hurry; but, woe's me! it did not play puh on the red-het stones, that whizzed like iron in a smiddy trough; so, as soon as it was darkness and smoke in one place, it was fire and fury in another.

My anxiety was great: seeing that I had done my best for my nei'bours, it behoved me now, in my turn, to try and see what I could do for myself; so, notwithstanding the remonstrances of my friend James Batter—whom Nanse, kenning I had bare feet, had sent out to seek me, with a pair of shoon in his hand; and, who, in scratching his head, mostly rugged out every hair of his wig with sheer vexation—I ran off, and mounted the ladder a second time, and succeeded, after muckle speeling, in getting upon the top of the wall; where, having a bucket slung up to me by means of a rope, I swashed down such showers on the top of the flames, that I soon did more good, in the space of five minutes, than the engine and the ten men, that were all in a broth of

perspiration with pumping it, did the whole night over; to say nothing of the multitude of drawers of water, men, wives, and weans, with their cudies, leglins, pitchers, pails, and water-stoups; having the satisfaction, in a short time, to observe every thing getting as black as the crown of my hat, and the gable of my own house growing as cool as a cucumber.

Being a man of method, and acquainted with business, I could have liked to have given a finishing stitch to my work before coming down; but, losh me! sic a whinging, girning, greeting, and roaring, got up, all of a sudden, as was never seen or heard of since bowed Joseph raised the meal-mob, and burned Johnnie Wilkes in effigy; and, looking down, I saw Benjie, the bairn of my own heart, and the callant Glen, my apprentice on trial, that had both been as sound as tops till this blessed moment, standing in their night-gowns and their little red cowls, rubbing their een, cowering with cold and fright, and making an awful uproar, crying on me to come down, and not be killed. The voice of Benjie especially pierced through and through my heart, like a two-edged sword, and I could on no manner of account, suffer myself to bear them any longer, as I jaloused the bairn would have gone into convulsion-fits if I had not heeded him; so, making a sign to them to be quiet, I came my ways down, taking hold of one in ilka hand, which must have been a father-

ly sight to the spectators that saw us. After waiting on the crown of the causeway for half an hour, to make sure that the fire was extinguished, and all tight and right, I saw the crowd scaling, and thought it best to go in too, carrying the two youngsters along with me. When I began to move off, however, siccan a cheering of the multitude got up as would have deafened a cannon; and, though I say it myself, who should not say't, they seemed struck with a sore amazement at my heroic behaviour, following me with loud cheers, even to the threshold of my own door.

From this folk should condescend to take a lesson, seeing that, though the world is a bitter bad world, yet that good deeds are not only a reward to themselves, but call forth the applause of Jew and Gentile; for the sweet savour of my conduct on this memorable night, remained in my nostrils for goodness kens the length of time, many praising my brave humanity, in public companies, and assemblies of the people, such as strawberry ploys, council meetings, dinner parties, and so forth; and many in private conversation at their own ingle-cheek, by way of two-handed crack; in stage-coach confab, and in causeway talk i' the forenoon, before going in to take their meridians. Indeed, between friends, the business proved in the upshot of no small advantage to me, bringing to me a sowd of strange faces, by way of customers, both gentle and semple, that I

verily believe, had not so muckle as ever heard of my name before, and giving me many a coat to cut, and claith to shape, that, but for my gallant behaviour on the fearsome night aforesaid, would have been cut, sewed, and shaped by other hands. Indeed, considering the great noise the thing made in the world, it is no wonder that every one was anxious to have a garment of wearing apparel made by the individual same hands that had succeeded, under Providence, in saving the precious life of an old woman of eighty, that had been bedridden, some say, four years come Yule, and others, come Martinmas.

When we got to the ingle-side, and barring the door, saw that all was safe, it was now three in the morning; so we thought it by much the best way of managing, not to think of sleeping any more, but to be on the look-out—as we aye used to be when walking sentry in the volunteers—in case the flames should by ony mischancy accident or other, happen to break out again. My wife blamed my hardihood muckle, and the rashness with which I had ventured at once to places where even masons and sclaters were afraid to put foot on, yet I saw, in the interim, that she looked on me with a prouder ee; kenning herself the helpmate of one that had courageously risked his neck, and every bone in his skin, in the cause of humanity. I saw this as plain as a pikestaff, as, with one of her kindest looks, she in-

sisted on my putting on a better happing to screen me from the cold, and on my taking something comfortable inwardly towards the dispelling of bad consequences. So, after half a minute's stand-out, by way of refusal like, I agreed to a cupful of het-pint, as I thought it would be a thing Mungo Glen might never have had the good fortune to have tasted; and as it might operate by way of a cordial on the callant Benjie, who kept aye smally, and in a dwining way. No sooner said than done—and off Nanse brushed in a couple of hurries to make the het-pint.

After the small beer was put into the pan to boil, we found, to our great mortification, that there were no eggs in the house, and Benjie was sent out with a candle to the hen-house, to see if any of the hens had laid since gloaming, and fetch what he could get. In the middle of the mean time, I was expatiating to Mungo on what taste it would have, and how he had never seen anything finer than it would be, when in ran Benjie, all out of breath, and his face as pale as a dishclout.

"What's the matter, Benjie, what's the matter?" said I to him, rising up from my chair in a great hurry of a fright—"Has onybody killed ye? or is the fire broken out again? or has the French landed? or have ye seen a ghaist? or are——"

"Eh crifty!" cried Benjie, coming till his mind, "they're a' aff—cock and hens and a'—there's naething left but the rotten nest-egg in the corner!"

This was an awful dispensation, of which more hereafter. In the midst of the desolation of the fire —such is the depravity of human nature—some ne'er-do-weels had taken advantage of my absence to break open the hen-house door, and our whole stock of poultry, the cock along with our seven hens—two of them tappit, and one muffed, were carried away bodily, stoup and roup.

On this subject, howsoever, I shall say no more in this chapter, but merely observe in conclusion, that, as to our het-pint, we were obligated to make the best of a bad bargain, making up with whisky what it wanted in eggs; though our banquet could not be called altogether a merry one, the joys of our escape from the horrors of the fire, being damped, as it were, by a wet blanket, on account of the nefarious pillaging of our hen-house.

CHAPTER XX.

ADVENTURES IN THE SPORTING LINE.

A fig for them by law protected,
  Liberty's a glorious feast;
Courts for cowards were erected,
  Churches built to please the priest.
Jolly Beggars.

Wi' cauk and keel I'll win your bread,
And spindles and whorles for them wha need,
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed,
  To carry the Gaberlunzie on.
I'll bow my leg and crook my knee,
And draw a black clout owre my ee,
A cripple or blind they will ca' me,
  While we shall be merry and sing.
KING JAMES V.

THE situation of me and my family at this time, affords an example of the truth of the old proverb, that " ae evil never comes its lane ;" being no sooner quit of our dread concerning the burning, than we were doomed by Providence to undergo the disaster of the rookery of our hen-house. I believe I have

mentioned the number of our stock; to wit, a cock and seven hens, eight in all; but I neglected, on account of their size, or somehow overlooked the two bantams, than which two more neat or curiouser-looking creatures were not to be seen in the whole country-side. The hennie was quite a conceit of a thing, and laid an egg not muckle bigger than my thimble; while, for size, the bit he-ane was, for spirit in the fechting line, a perfect wee deevil incarnate.

Most fortunately for my family in this matter, it so happened, that by paying in half-a-crown a-year, I was a regular member of a society for prosecuting all whom it might concern, that dabbled with foul fingers in the sinful and lawless trade of thievery, breaking the eighth commandment at no allowance, and drawing on their heads not only the passing punishments of this world, by way of banishment to Botany-Bay, or hanging at the Luckenbooths, but the threatened vengeance of one that will last for-ever and ever.

Accordingly, putting on my hat about nine o'clock, or thereabouts, when the breakfast things were removing from the bit table, I poppit out, in the first and foremost instance, to take a vizzy of the depredation the flames had made in our neighbourhood. Losh keep us a', what a spectacle of wreck and ruination! The roof was clean off and away, as if a thunderbolt from heaven had knocked it down

through the two floors, carrying everything before it like a perfect whirlwind. Nought were standing but black, bare walls, a perfect picture of desolation; some with the bit pictures on nails still hanging up where the rooms were like; and others with auld coats hanging on pins; and empty bottles in boles, and so on. Indeed, Jacob Glowr, who was standing by my side with his specs on, could see as plain as a pikestaff, a tea-kettle, still on the fire, in the hearth-place of one of the gable garrets, where Miss Jenny Withershins lived, but happened luckily, at the time of the conflagration, to be away to Prestonpans, on a visit to some of her far-away cousins.

Having satisfied my een with a daylight view of the terrible devastation, I went away leisurely up the street, with my hands in my breek-pouches, comparing the scene in my mind with the downfal of Babylon the Great, and Sodom and Gomorah, and Tyre and Sidon, and Jerusalem, and all the lave of the great towns that had fallen to decay, according to the foretelling of the sacred prophets, until I came to the door of Donald Gleig, the head of the Fief Society, to whom I related, from beginning to end, the whole business of the hen-stealing. 'Od he was a mettle bodie of a creature; far north, Aberdeen-awa like, and looking at two sides of a bawbee; but, to give the de'il his due, in this instance he behaved

to me like a gentleman. Not only did Donald send through the drum in the course of half-an-hour, offering a reward for the apprehension of the offenders of three guineas,' names concealed, but he got a warrant granted to Francie Deep, the sherry-officer, to make search in the houses of several suspicious persons.

The reward offered by tuck of drum failed, nobody making application to the crier; but the search succeeded, as, after turning everything topsy-turvy, the feathers were found in a bag, in the house of an auld woman of vile character, who contrived to make out a way of living, by hiring beds at twopence a-night to Eirish travellers—South-country packmen, sturdy beggars, men, and women, and weans of them — Yetholm tinklers — wooden-legged sailors, without Chelsea pensions—dumb spaewomen—keepers of wild-beast shows—dancing-dog folk—spunk-makers, and such like pick-pockets. The thing was as plain as the loof of my hand,—for, besides great suspicion, what was more, was the finding the head of the muffed hen, to which I could have sworn, lying in a bye corner; the body itself, not being so kenspecle in its disjasket state, as it hung twirling in a string by its legs before the fire, all buttered over with swine's seam, and half roasted.

After some little ado, and having called in two men that were passing to help us to take them pris-

oners, in case of their being refractory, we carried them by the lug and the horn before a justice of peace.

Except the fact of the stown goods being found in their possession, it so chanced, ye observe, that we had no other sort of evidence whatsoever; but we took care to examine them one at a time, the tane no hearing what the tither said; so, by dint of cross-questioning by one who well kenned how to bring fire out of flint, we soon made the guilty convict themselves, and brought the transaction home to two wauf-looking fellows that we had got smoking in a corner. From the speerings that were put to them during their examination, it was found that they tried to make a way of doing by swindling folks at fairs by the game of the garter. Indeed, it was stupid of me not to recognize their faces at first sight, having observed both of them loitering about our back bounds the afternoon before; and one of them, the tall one with the red head and fustian jacket, having been in my shop in the fore part of the night, about the gloaming like, asking me as a favour for a yard or two of spare runds, or selvages.

I've aye heard that seeing's believing; and that youth might take a warning from the punishment that sooner or later is aye tacked to the tail of crime, I took Benjie and Mungo to hear the trial; and two more rueful faces than they put on, when they looked at the culprits, were never seen since Adam was a

boy. It was far different with the two Eirishers, who showed themselves so hardened by a long course of sin and misery, that, instead of abasing themselves in the face of a magistrate, they scarcely almost gave a civil answer to a single question which was speered at them. Howsoever, they paid for that at a heavy ransom, as ye shall hear bye and bye.

Having been kept all night in the cold tolbooth on bread and water, without either coal or candle to warm their toes, or let them see what they were doing, they were harled out amid an immense crowd of young and old, more especially wives and weans, at eleven o'clock on the next forenoon, to the endurance of a punishment which ought to have afflicted them almost as muckle as that of death itself.

When the key of the jail door was thrawn, and the two loons brought out, there was a bumming of wonder, and maybe sorrow, among the terrible crowd, to see fellow-creatures so left alone to themselves, as to have robbed an honest man's hen-house at the dead hour of night, when a fire was bleezing next door, and the howl of desolation soughing over the town like a visible judgment. One of them, as I said before, had a red pow and a foraging cap, with a black napkin ropined round his weasand, a jean jacket with four pouches, and square tails; a velveteen waistcoat, with plaited buttons; corduroy breeches, buttoned at the knees; rig-and-fur stock-

ings; and heavy, clanking wooden clogs. The other, who was little and round-shouldered, with a bull neck, and bushy black whiskers, just like a shoe-brush, stuck to each cheek of his head, had on a low-crowned, plated beaver hat, with the end of a peacock's feather stuck in the band; a lang-tailed auld black coat, as brown as a berry, and as bare as my loof, to say nothing of being out at both elbows. His trowsers, I dare say, had once been nankeen; but as they did not appear to have seen the washing-tub for a season or two, it would be rash to give any decided opinion on that head. In short, they were two awful-like raggamuffins.

Women, however, are aye sympathizing and merciful; so, as I was standing among the crowd, as they came down the tolbooth stair, chained together by the cuffs of the coat, one said, "Wae's me! what a weel-faur'd fellow, wi' the red head, to be found guilty of stealing folk's hen-houses!"—And another one said, "Hech, sirs! what a bonny black-a-viced man that little ane is, to be paraded through the streets for a warld's wonder!" But I said nothing, kenning the thing was just, and a wholesome example, holding Benjie on my shoulder to see the poukit hens tied about their necks like keeking-glasses. But, puh! the fellows did not give a pinch of snuff; so off they set, and in this manner were drummed through the bounds of the parish, a constable walking at each side of them, with Lochaber

axes, and the town-drummer row-de-dowing the thief's march at their backs. It was a humbling sight.

My heart was wae, notwithstanding the ills they had done me and mine, by the nefarious pillaging of our hen-house, to see two human creatures of the same flesh and blood as myself, undergoing the righteous sentence of the law, in a manner so degrading to themselves, and so pitiful to all that beheld them. But, nevertheless, considering what they had done, they neither deserved, nor did they seem to care for commiseration, holding up their brazen faces as if they had been taking a pleasure walk for the benefit of their health, and the poukit hens, that dangled before them, ornaments of their bravery. The whole crowd, young and old, followed them from ae end of the town to the tither, liking to ding one another over, so anxious were they to get a sight of what was going on; but when they came to the gate-end they stopped and gave the ne'er-do-weels three cheers. What think ye did the ne'er-do-weels do in return? Fie shame! they took off their old scrapers and gave a huzza too, clapping their hands behind them, in a manner as deplorable to relate, as it was shocking to behold.

Their chains, the things ye ken that held their cuffs together, were by this time taken off, along with the poukit hens, which I fancy the town-offishers took home and cooked for their dinner; so they

shook hands with the drummer, wishing him a good day, and a pleasant walk home, brushing away on the road to Edinburgh, where their wives and weans, who had no doubt made a good supper on the spuilzie of the hens, had gone away before, maybe to have something comfortable for their arrival, their walk being likely to give them an appetite.

Had they taken away all the rest of the hens, and only left the bantams, on which they must have found but desperate little eating, and the muffed one, I would have cared less; it being from several circumstances a pet one in the family, having been brought in a blackbird's cage by the carrier from Lauder, from my wife's mother, in a present to Benjie on his birth-day. The creature almost grat himself blind, when he heard of our having seen it roasting in a string by the legs before the fire, and found its bonny muffed head in a corner.

But let abee likings, the callant was otherwise a loser in its death, she having regularly laid a caller egg to him every morning, which he got along with his tea and bread, to the no small benefit of his health, being, as I have taken occasion to remark before, far from being robusteous in the constitution. I am sure I ken one thing, that I would have willingly given the louns a crown piece to have preserved it alive, hen though it was of my own; but no, the

bloody deed was over and done, before we were aware that the poor thing's life was sacrificed.

The names of the two Eirishers were John Dochart, and Dennis Flint, both, according to their own deponement, from the county of Tipperary; and weel-a-wat the place has no great credit in producing two such bairns. Often, after that, did I look through that part of the Adverteezer newspapers, that has a list of all the accidents, and so on, just above the births, marriages, and deaths, which I liked to read regularly. Howsoever, it was two year before I discovered their names again, having, it seems, during a great part of that period, lived under the forged name of Alias; and I saw that they were both shipped off at Leith, for transportation to some country called the Hulks, for being habit and repute thieves, and for having made a practice of coining bad silver. The thing, however, that condemned them, was for having knocked down a drunk man in a beastly state of intoxication, on the King's highway in broad daylight; and having robbed him of his hat, wig, and neckcloth, an upper and under vest, a coat and great-coat, a pair of Hessian boots, which he had on his legs, a silver watch, with four brass seals and a key, besides a snuff-box made of boxwood, with an invisible hinge, one of the Lawrence-kirk breed; a pair of specs, some odd ha'pennies, and a Camperdown pocket-napkin.

But of all months of the year—or maybe indeed of my blessed lifetime, this one was the most adventurous. It seemed, indeed, as if some especial curse of Providence hung ower the canny town of Dalkeith, and that, like the great cities of the plain, we were at long and last to be burnt up from the face of the earth with a shower of fire and brimstone.

Just three days after the drumming of the two Eirish ne'er-do-weels, a deaf and dumb woman came in prophesying at our back door, offering to spae fortunes. She was tall and thin, an unco witch-looking creature, with a runkled brow, sun-brunt haffits, and two sharp-looking een, like a hawk's, whose glance went through ye like the cut and thrust of a two-edged sword. On her head she had a tawdry brownish black bonnet, that had not improved from two three years tholing of sun and wind; a thin rag of a grey duffle mantle was thrown over her shoulders, below which was a checked shortgown of gingham stripe, and a green glazed manco petticoat. Her shoon were terrible bauchles, and her grey worsted stockings, to hide the holes in them, were all dragooned down about her heels. On the whole, she was rather, I must confess, an out-of-the-way creature; and though I had not muckle faith in these bodies that pretend to see farther through a millstone than their nei'bours, I somehow or other, taking pity on her miserable condition, being still a fellow-creature, though plain in the lugs, that I had not the

fairly bamboozled my understanding; as I thought there surely must be some league and paction with the Old One; but the farther in the deeper. She then pointed to my wife, writing down, "Your name is Nancy,"—and turning to me, as she made some dumbie signs, she caulked down, "Your name is Mansie Wauch, that saved the precious life of an auld, bedridden woman from the fire; and will soon get a lottery ticket of twenty thousand pounds."

Kenning the truth of the rest of what she had said, I could not help jumping on the floor with joy, and seeing that she was up to everything, as plain as if it had happened in her presence. The good news set us all a louping with general joy, my wife and the laddies clapping their hands, as if they had found a fiddle; so, jalousing they might lose their discretion in their mirth, I turned round to the three, holding up my hand, and saying, "In the name o' Gudeness, dinna mention this to ony leeving sowl; as, mind ye, I havena taken out the ticket yet. The doing so might not only set them to the sinful envying of our good fortune, as forbidden in the tenth commandment, but might lead away oursell, to be gutting our fish before we get them."

"Mind then," said Nanse, "about your promise to me, concerning the silk gown, and the pair——"

"Wheesht, wheesht, gudewifie," answered I. "There's a braw time coming. We must not be in ower great a hurry."

I then bade the woman sit down by the ingle cheek, and our wife to give her a piece of cold beef, and a shave of bread, besides twopence out of my own pocket. Some, on hearing siccan sooms mentioned, would have immediately strucken work, but, even in the height of my grand expectations, I did not forget the old saying, that "a bird in the hand is worth twa in the bush;" and being thrang with a pair of leggins for Eben Bowsie, I brushed away ben to the workshop, thinking the woman, or witch, or whatever she was, would have more freedom and pleasure in eating by herself.—That she had, I am now bound to say by experience.

Two days after, when we were sitting at our comfortable tour-hours, in came little Benjie, running out of breath—just at the 'dividual moment of time my wife and me were jeering one another, about how we would behave when we came to be grand leddies and gentlemen, keeping a flunkie maybe—to tell us, that when he was playing at the bools, on the plainstanes before the auld kirk, he had seen the deaf and dumb spaewife harled away to the tolbooth, for stealing a pair of trowsers, that were hanging drying on a tow, in Judeh Elshinder's back closs. I could scarcely credit the callant, though I kenned he would not tell a lee for sixpence, and I said to him, "Now be sure, Benjie, before ye speak. The tongue is a dangerous weapon, and apt to bring folk into trouble—it might be another woman."

It was real cleverality in the callant. He said, "Ay, faither, but it was her; and she contrived to bring herself into trouble, without a tongue at a'."

I could not help laughing at this, it showed Benjie to be siccan a genius; so he said,

"Ye needna laugh, faither; for it's as true's death, it was her. Do ye think I didna ken in a minute our cheese-toaster, that used to hing beside the kitchen fire; and that the sherry-offisher took out frae beneath her grey cloak?"

The smile gaed off Nanse's cheek like lightning, and she said it could not be true; but she would go to the kitchen to see. I'fegs it was ower true; for she never came back to tell the contrary.

This was really and truly a terrible business, but the truth for all that, the cheese-toaster casting up not an hour after, in the hands of Daniel Search, to whom I gave a dram. The loss of the tin cheese-toaster would have been a trifle, especially as it was broken in the handle,—but this was an awful blow to the truth of the fief dumbie's grand prophecy. Nevertheless, it seemed at the time gey puzzling to me, to think how a deaf and dumb woman, unless she had some wonderful gift, could have told us what she did.

On the next day, the Friday I think, that story was also made as clear as daylight to us; for, being banished out of the town as a common thief and vagabond down on the Musselburgh road, by order of a justice of the peace, it was the bounden duty of

Daniel Search and Geordie Sharp, to see her safe past the kennel, the length of Smeaton. They then tried to make her understand by writing on the wall, that if ever again she was seen or heard tell of in the town, she would be banished to Botany Bay; but she had a great fecht, it seems, to make out Daniel's bad spellin', he having been very ill yedicated, and no deacon at the pen.

Howsoever, they got her to understand their meaning, by giving her a shove forward by the shoulders, and aye pointing down to Inveresk. Thinking she did not hear them, they then took upon themselves the liberty of calling her some ill names, and bade her good day as a bad one; but she was upsides with them for acting, in that respect, above their commission; for she wheeled round again to them; and, snapping her fingers at their noses, gave a curse, and bade them go home, for a couple of dirty Scotch vermin.

The two men were perfectly dumbfoundered at hearing the tongue-tied wife speaking as well as themselves; and could not help stopping to look after her for a long way on the road, as every now and then she stuck one of her arms in her side, and gave a dance round in the whirling-jig way, louping like daft, and lilting like a grey lintie. From her way of speaking, they also saw immediately that she too was an Eirisher.—They must be a bonny family when they are all at home.

CHAPTER XXI.

ANENT MUNGO GLEN.

"Earth to earth" and "dust to dust,"
The solemn priest hath said,
So we lay the turf above thee now,
And we seal thy narrow bed:
But thy spirit, brother, soars away
Among the faithful blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

MILMAN.

PERHAPS, since I was born, I do not remember such a string of casualties, as happened to me and mine, all within the period of one short fortnight. To say nothing connected with the play-acting business, which was immediately before,—first came Mungo Glen's misfortune with regard to the blood-soiling of the new nankeen trowsers, the foremost of his transactions, and a bad omen,—next, the fire, and all its wonderfuls, the saving of the old bedridden woman's precious life, and the destruction of the poor cat,—syne the robbery of the hen-house by the

Eirish ne'er-do-weels, who paid so sweetly for their pranks,—and lastly, the hoax, the thieving of the cheese-toaster without the handle, and the banishment of the spaewife.

These were awful signs of the times, and seemed to say that the world was fast coming to a finis; the ends of the earth appearing to have combined in a great Popish plot of villany. Every man that had a heart to feel, must have trembled amid these threatening, judgment-like, and calamitous events. As for my own part, the depravity of the nations, which most of these scenes showed me, I must say fell heavily over my spirit; and I could not help thinking of the old cities of the plain, over the house-tops of which, for their heinous sins and iniquitous abominations, the wrath of the Almighty showered down fire and brimstone from heaven, till the very earth melted and swallowed them up for ever and ever.

These added to the number, to be sure; but not that I had never before seen signs and wonders in my times. I had seen the friends of the people,—and the scarce years,—and the bloody gulleteening overbye among the French blackguards,—and the business of Watt and Downie nearer home, at our own doors almost, in Edinburgh like,—and the calling out of the volunteers,—and divers sea-fights at Camperdown and elsewhere,--and land battles countless,--and the American war, part o't,--and awful murders,

—and mock-fights in the Duke's Párks,—and highway robberies,—and breakings of all the Ten Commandments, from the first to the last; so that, allowing me to have had but a common spunk of reflection, I must, like others, have cast a wistful eye on the on-goings of men; and, if I had not strength to pour out my inward lamentations, I could not help thinking, with fear and trembling, at the rebellion of siccan a worm against a Power whose smallest word could extinguish its existence, and blot it out in a twinkling from the roll of living things.

But, if I was much affected, the callant Mungo was a great deal more. From the days in which he had lain in his cradle, he had been brought up in a remote and quiet part of the country, far from the bustling of towns, and from man encountering man in the stramash of daily life; so that his heart seemed to pine within him like a flower, for want of the blessed morning dew; and, like a bird that has been catched in a girn among the winter snows, his appetite failed him, and he fell away from his meat and claes.

I was vexed exceedingly to see the callant in this dilemmy, for he was growing very tall and thin, his chaft-blades being lank and white, and his een of a hollow drumliness, as if he got no refreshment from the slumbers of the night. Beholding all this work of destruction going on in silence, I spoke to his

friend Mrs. Grassie about him, and she was so motherly as to offer to have a glass of port wine, stirred with best jesuits barks, ready for him every forenoon at twelve o'clock; for really nobody could be but interested in the laddie, he was so gentle and modest, making never a word of complaint, though melting like snow off a dyke; and, though he must have suffered both in body and mind, enduring all with a silent composure, worthy of a holy martyr.

Perceiving things going on from bad to worse, I thought it was best to break the matter to him, as he was never like to speak himself; and I asked him in a friendly way, as we were sitting together on the board, finishing a pair of fustian overalls for Maister Bob Bustle—a riding clerk for one of the Edinburgh spirit shops, but who liked aye to have his claes of the Dalkeith cut, having been born, bred, and educated in our town, like his forebears before him—if there was anything the matter with him, that he was aye so dowie and heartless? Never shall I forget the look he gave me, as he lifted up his een, in which I could see visible distress painted, as plain as the figures of the saints, on auld kirk windows; but he told me, with a faint smile, that he had nothing particular to complain of, only that he would have liked to have died among his friends, as he could not live from home, and away from the life he had been accustomed to all his days.

'Od, I was touched to the quick; and when I

heard him speaking of death in such a calm, quiet way, I found something, as if his words were words of prophecy, and as if I had seen a sign that told me he was not to be long for this world. Howsoever, I hope I had more sense than to let this be seen, so I said till him, "Ou, if that be a', Mungo, ye'll soon come to like us a' weel eneuch. Ye should take a stout heart, man; and when your 'prenticeship's dune, ye'll gang hame and set up for a great man, making coats for a' the lords and lairds in broad Lammermuir."

"Na, na," answered the callant, with a trembling voice, which mostly made my heart swell to my mouth, and brought the tear to my eye, "I'll never see the end o' my 'prenticeship, nor Lammermuir again."

"Hout touts, man," quo' I, "never speak in that sort o' way; it's distrustfu' and hurtful. Live in hope, though we should die in despair. When ye gang hame again, ye'll be as happy as ever."

"Eh, na—never, never, even though I was to gang hame the morn. I'll never be as I was before. I lived and lived on, never thinking that such days were to come to an end—but now I find it can, and must be otherwise. The thoughts of my heart have been broken in upon, and naething can make haill what has been shivered to pieces."

This was to the point, as Dannie Thummel said to his needle; so just for speaking's sake, and to

rouse him up a bit, I said, "Keh, man, what need ye care sae muckle about the country?—It'll never be like our bonny streets, wi' a' the braw shop windows, and the auld kirk; and the stands wi' the horn spoons and luggies; and a' the carts on the market days; and the Duke's gate, and so on."

"Ay, but, maister," answered Mungo, "ye was never brought up in the country—ye never kent what it was to wander about in the simmer glens, wi' naething but the warm sun looking down on ye, the blue waters streaming ower the braes, the birds singing, and the air like to grow sick wi' the breath of blooming birks, and flowers of all colours, and wild thyme sticking fu' o' bees, humming in joy and thankfulness.—Ye never kent, maister, what it was to wake in the still morning, when, looking out, ye saw the snaws lying for miles round about ye on the hills, breast deep, shutting ye out frae the world, as it were; the foot of man never coming during the storm to your door, nor the voice of a stranger heard frae ae month's end till the ither. See, it is coming on o' hail the now, and my mother with my sister—I have but ane—and my four brithers, will be looking out into the drift, and missing me away for the first time frae their fireside. They'll hae a dreary winter o't, breaking their hearts for me—their ballants and their stories will never be sae funny again—and my heart is breaking for them."

With this, the tears prap-prapped down his

cheeks, but his pride bade him turn his head round to hide them from me. A heart of stone would have felt for him.

I saw it was in vain to persist long, as the laddie was falling out of his claes, as fast as leaves from the November tree; so I wrote home by limping Jamie the carrier, telling his father the state of things, and advising him, as a matter of humanity, to take his son out to the free air of the hills again, as the town smoke did not seem to agree with his stomach; and, as he might be making a sticked tailor of one who was capable of being bred a good farmer; no mortal being likely to make a great progress in any thing, unless the heart goes with the handiwork.

Some folks will think I acted right, and others wrong in this matter; if I erred, it was on the side of mercy, and my conscience does not upbraid me for the transaction. In due course of time, I had an answer from Maister Glen, and we got everything ready and packed up, against the hour that Jamie was to set out again.

Mungo got himself all dressed; and Benjie had taken such a liking to him, that I thought he would have grutten himself senseless, when he heard he was going away back to his own home. One would not have imagined, that such a sincere friendship could have taken root in such a short time, but the bit creature Benjie was as warm-hearted a callant as ye

ever saw. Mungo told him, that if he would not cry, he would send him in a present of a wee ewe-milk cheese, whenever he got home; which promise pacified him, and he asked me if Benjie would come out for a month, gin simmer, when he would let him see all worthy observation along the country-side.

When we had shaken hands with Mungo, and, after fastening his comforter about his neck, wished him a good journey, we saw him mounted on the front of limping Jamie's cart; and, as he drove away, I must confess my heart was grit. I could not help running up the stair, and pulling up the forewindow to get a long look after him. Away, and away they were; in a short time, the cart took a turn, and disappeared; and, when I drew down the window, and sauntered, with my arms crossed, down to the workshop, something seemed amissing, and the snug wee place, with its shapings and runds, and paper-measurings, and its bit fire, seemed, in my een, to look douff and gousty.

Whether in the jougging of the cart, or what else I cannot say, but it's an unco story; for, on the road, it turned out, that poor Mungo was seized with a terrible pain in his side; and, growing worse and worse, was obliged to be left at Lauder, in the care of a decent widow woman, that had a blind eye, and a room to let furnished.

It was not for two three days that we learnt these

awful tidings, which greatly distressed us all; and I gave the driver of the Lauder coach threepence to himself, to bring us word every morning, as he passed the door, how the laddie was going on.

I learned shortly, that his faither and mother had arrived, which was ae comfort; but that matters with poor Mungo were striding on from bad to worse, being pronounced, by a skeely doctor, to be in a gallopping consumption—and not able to be removed home, a thing that the laddie freaked and pined for night and day. At length, hearing for certain that he had not long to live, I thought myself bound to be at the expense of taking a ride out on the top of the coach; though I was aware of the danger of the machines whiles couping, if it were for no more than to bid him fare-ye-weel—and I did so.

It was a cold cloudy day in February, and every thing on the road looked dowie and cheerless; the very cows and sheep, that crowded cowring beneath the trees in the parks, seemed to be grieving for some disaster and hanging down their heads like mourners at a burial. The rain whiles obliged me to put up my umbrella, and there was no body on the top beside me, save a deaf woman, that aye said "ay" to every question I speered, and with whom I found it out of the power of man to carry on any rational conversation; so I was obliged to sit glowring from side to side at the bleak, bare fields—and the plashing grass—and the gloomy dull woods—and the gentlemen's

houses, of which I knew not the names—and the fearful rough hills, that put me in mind of the wilderness, and of the abomination of desolation mentioned in scripture, I believe in Ezekiel. The errand I was going on, to be sure, helped to make me mair wae; and I could not but think on human life, without agreeing with Solomon, that "all was vanity and vexation of spirit."

At long and last, when we came to our journey's end, and I louped off the top of the coach, Maister Glen came out to the door, and bad me haste me, if I wished to see Mungo breathing. Sauf us! to think that a poor young thing was to be taken away from life, and the cheerful sun, thus suddenly, and be laid in the cold damp mools, among the moudiewarts and the green banes, "where there is no work or device." But what'll ye say there? it was the will of Him, who knows best what is for his creatures, and to whom we should—and must submit. I was just in time to see the last row of his glazing een, that then stood still for ever, as he lay, with his face as pale as clay, on the pillow, his mother holding his hand, and sob-sobbing with her face leant on the bed, as if her hope was departed, and her heart would break. I gaed round about, and took hold of the other one for a moment; but it was clammy, and growing cold with the coldness of grim death. I could hear my heart beating; but Mungo's heart stood still, like a watch that has run itself down.

Maister Glen sat in the easy chair, with his hand before his een, saying nothing, and shedding not a tear; for he was a strong, little, black-a-viced man, with a feeling heart, but with nerves of steel. The rain rattled on the window, and the smoke gave a swurl, as the wind rummelled i' the lum. The hour spoke to the soul, and the silence was worth twenty sermons.

They who would wish to know the real value of what we are all over apt to prize in this world, should have been there too, and learnt a lesson not soon to be forgotten. I put my hand in my coat pocket for my napkin, to give my een a wipe, but found it was away, and feared muckle I had dropped it on the road; though, in this, I was happily mistaken, having, before I went to my bed, found that on my journey I had tied it over my neckcloth, to keep away sore throats.

It was a sad heart to us all, to see the lifeless creature in his white night-cap and een closed, lying with his yellow hair spread on the pillow; and we went out, that the women-folk might cover up the looking-glass and the face of the clock, ere they proceeded to dress the body in its last claes—claes that would ne'er need changing; but, when we were half down the stair, and I felt glad with the thoughts of getting to the fresh air, we were obliged to turn up again for a wee, to let the man past, that was bringing in the dead-deal.

But why weave a long story out of the materials of sorrow? or endeavour to paint feelings that have no outward sign, lying shut up within the sanctuary of the heart? The grief of a father and a mother can only be conceived by them who, as fathers and mothers, have suffered the loss of their bairns,—a treasure more precious to nature than silver or gold, home to the land-sick sailor, or daylight to the blind man, sitting beaking in the heat of the morning sun.

The coffin having been ordered to be got ready with all haste, two men brought it in on their shoulders betimes on the following morning; and it was a sight that made my blood run cold to see the dead corpse of poor Mungo, my own 'prentice, hoisted up from the bed, and laid in his black-handled, narrow housie. All had taken their last looks, the lid was screwed down by means of screw-drivers, and I read the plate, which said, "Mungo Glen, aged 15." Alas! early was he cut off from among the living—a flower snapped in its spring blossom—and an awful warning to us all, sinful and heedless mortals, of the uncertainty of this state of being.

In the course of the forenoon, Maister Glen's cart was brought to the door, drawn by two black horses with long tails and hairy feet, a tram one and a leader. Though the job shook my nerves, I could not refuse to give them a hand down the stair with the coffin, which had a fief-like smell of death and

saw-dust; and we got it fairly landed in the cart, among clean straw. I saw the clodhapper of a plowman aye dighting his een with the sleeve of his bigcoat.

The mother, Mistress Glen, a little fattish woman, and as fine a homely body as ye ever met with, but sorely distracted at this time by sorrow, sat at the head, with her bonnet drawn over her face, and her shawl thrown across her shoulders, being a blue and red spot on a white ground It was a dismal-like-looking thing to see her sitting there, with the dead body of her son at her feet; and, at the side o't his kist with his claes, on the top of which was tied—not being room for't in the inside like, (for he had twelve shirts, and three pair of trowsers, and a Sunday and every-day's coat, with stockings and other things)—his old white beaver hat, turned up behind, which he used to wear when he was with me. His Sunday's hat I did not see, but most likely it was in among his claes, to keep it from the rain, and preserved, no doubt, for the use of some of his little brothers, please God, when they grew up a wee bigger.

Seeing Maister Glen, who had cut his chin in shaving, in a worn-out disjasket state, mounted on his sheltie, I shook hands with them both; and, in my thoughtlessness, wished them "a good journey,"—knowing well what a sorrowful home-going it would be to them, and what their bairns would think

when they saw what was lying in the cart beside their mother. On this the big plowman, that wore a broad blue bonnet and corduroy cutikins, with a grey big-coat slit up behind in the manner I commonly made for laddies, gave his long whip a crack, and drove off to the eastward.

It would be needless in me to waste precious time in relating how I returned to my own country, especially as I may be thankful that nothing particular happened, excepting the coach wheels riding over an old dog that was lying sleeping on the middle of the road, and, poor brute, nearly got one of his fore-paws chacked off. The day was sharp and frosty, and all the passengers took a loup off at a yill-house, with a Hiclandman on the sign of it, to get a dram, to gar them bear up against the cold; yet kenning what had but so lately happened, and having the fears of Maister Wiggie before my een, I had made a solemn vow, within myself, not to taste liquor for six months at least; nor would I here break my word, tho' much made a fool of by an Englisher, and a fou Eirsiher, who sang all the road, contenting myself, in the best way I could, with a tumbler of strong beer, and two butter-bakes.

It is an old proverb, and a true one, that there is no rest to the wicked; so when I got home, I found business crying out for me loudly, having been twice wanted to take the measure for suits of claes. Of course, kenning that my two customers would

be wearying, I immediately cut my stick to their houses, and promised without fail to have my work done against the next Sabbath. Whether from my hurry, or my grief for poor Mungo, or maybe from both, I found on the Saturday night, when the claes were sent home on the arm of Tammie Bodkin, whom I was obliged to hire by way of foresman, that some awful mistake had occurred—the coat of the one having been made for the back of the other, the one being long and tall, the other thick and short; so that Maister Peter Pole's cuffs did not reach above half-way down his arms, and the tails ended at the small of the back, rendering him a perfect fright; while Maister Watty Firkin's new coat hung on him like a dreadnought, the sleeves coming over the nebs of his fingers, and the haunch buttons hanging down between his heels, making him resemble a mouse below a firlot. With some persuasion, however, there being but small difference in the value of the cloths, the one being a west of England bottle-green, and the other a Manchester blue, I caused them to niffer, and hushed up the business, which, had they been obstreperous, would have made half the parish of Dalkeith stand on end.

After poor Mungo had been beneath the mools, I daresay a good month, Benjie, as he was one forenoon diverting himself dozing his tap in the room where they sleeped, happened to drive it in below the bed, where, scrambling in on his hands and feet, he

found a half sheet of paper written over in Mungo's hand-writing, the which he brought to me; and, on looking over it, I found it jingled in metre like the psalms of David.

Having no skeel in these matters, I sent up the closs for James Batter, who being a member of the fifteen-pence-a-quarter subscription book-club, had read a power of all sorts of things, sacred and profane. James as he was humming it over with his specs on his beak, gave now and then a thump on his thigh, saying, "Prime, prime, man, fine, prime, good, capital," and so on, which astonished me much, kenning who had written it—a callant that had sleeped with our Benjie, and could not have shaped a pair of leggins, though we had offered him the crown of the three kingdoms.

Seeing what it was thought of by one who kent what was what, and could distinguish the difference between a B and bull's foot, I judged it necessary for me to take a copy of it; which, for the benefit of them that like poems, I do not scruple to tag to the tail of this chapter.

Oh wad that my time were ower but,
  Wi' this wintry sleet and snaw,
That I might see our house again
  I' the bonny birken shaw!—
For this is no my ain life,
  And I peak and pine away,
Wi' the thochts o' hame, and the young flow'rs,
  I' the glad green month o' May.

I used to walk in the morning
  Wi' the loud sang o' the lark,
And the whistling o' the ploughmen lads,
  As they gaed to their wark;
I used to weir in the young lambs
  Frae the tod and the roaring stream;
But the warld is changed, and a' thing now
  To me seems like a dream.

There are busy crowds around me
  On ilka lang dull street;
Yet, though sae mony surround me,
  I kenna ane I meet.
And I think on kind, kent faces,
  And o' blithe and cheery days,
When I wander'd out, wi' our ain folk,
  Out-owre the simmer braes.

Wae's me, for my heart is breaking!
  I think on my brithers sma',
And on my sister greeting,
  When I came frae hame awa;
And oh! how my mither sobbit,
  As she shook me by the hand;
When I left the door o' our auld house,
  To come to this stranger land!

There's nae place like our ain hame;
  Oh, I wish that I was there!—
There's nae hame like our ain hame
  To be met wi' ony where!—
And, oh! that I were back again
  To our farm and fields so green;
And heard the tongues o' my ain folk,
  And was what I hae been!

That's poor Mungo's poem; which I and James Batter, and the rest, think excellent, and not far short of Robert Burns himself, had he been spared. Some may judge otherwise, out of bad taste or ill nature; but I would just thank them to write a better at their leisure.

CHAPTER XXII.

A PHILISTINE IN THE COAL-HOLE.

They steeked doors, they steeked yetts,
 Close to the cheek and chin;
They steeked them a' but a wee wicket,
 And Lammikin crap in.

Ballad of the Lammikin

Hame cam our gudeman at een,
 And hame cam he;
And there he spied a man,
 Where a man shouldna be.
Hoo cam this man, kimmer,
 And who can it be;
Hoo cam this carle here,
 Without the leave o' me?

Old Song.

YEARS wore on after the departure and death of poor Mungo Glen, during the which I had a sowd apprentices, good, bad, and indifferent, and who afterwards cut, and are cutting, a variety of figures in the world. Sometimes I had two or three at a time; for the increase of business that flowed in up-

on me with a full stream was tremendous, enabling me—who say't that should not say't—to lay bye a wheen bawbees for a sore head, or the frailties of old age. Somehow or other, the claes made on my shop-board came into great vogue through all Dalkeith, both for neatness of shape, and nicety of workmanship; and the young journeymen of other masters did not think themselves perfected, or worthy a decent wage, till they had crooked their houghs for three months in my service. With regard to myself, some of my acquaintances told me, that if I had gone into Edinburgh to push my fortune, I could have cut half the trade out of bread, and maybe risen, in the course of nature, to be Lord Provost himself; but I just heard them speak, and kept my wheisht. Every man has a right to be the best judge of his own private matters; though, to be sure, the advice of a true friend is often more precious than rubies, and sweeter than the Balm of Gilead.

It was about the month of March, in the year of grace *anno domini* eighteen hundred, that the whole country trembled, like a giant ill of the ague, under the consternation of Bonaparte, and all the French vagabonds emigrating over, and landing in the Firth. Keep us all! the folk, doitit bodies, put less confidence than became them in what our volunteer regiments were able and willing to do; though we had a remnant among us of the true blood, that with loud laughter laughed the creatures to scorn; and I,

for one, kept up my pluck, like a true Hielander. Does any living soul believe that Scotland could be conquered, and the like of us sold, like Egyptian slaves, into captivity? Fie, fie—I despise such haivers. Are we not descended, faither and son, from Robert Bruce aud Sir William Wallace, having the bright blood of freemen in our veins, and the Pentland Hills, as well as our own dear homes and firesides, to fight for? The rascal that would not give cut-and-thrust for his country, as long as he had a breath to draw, or a leg to stand on, should be tied neck and heels, without benefit of clergy, and thrown over Leith pier, to swim for his life like a mangy dog!

Hard doubtless it is—and I freely confess it—to be called by sound of bugle, or tuck of drum, from the counter and the shop-board,—men, that have been born and bred to peaceful callings, to mount the red-jacket, soap the hair, buckle on the buff-belt, load with ball-cartridge, and screw bayonets; but it's no use talking; we were ever the free British; and before we would say to Frenchmen that we were their humble servants, we would either twist the very noses off their faces, or perish in the glorious struggle.

It was aye the opinion of the Opposition-folk, the Whigs, the Black-nebs, the Radicals, and the Friends of the People, together with the rest of the clan-jamphrey, that it was a done battle, and that Bona-

parte would lick us back and side. All this was in the heart and heat of the great war, when we were struggling, like drowning men, for our very life and existence, and when our colours were nailed to the mast-head. One would have thought they were a set of prophets, they were all so busy prophesying and never anything good. They kent (believe them) that we were to be smote hip and thigh; and that to oppose the vile Corsican was like men with strait-jackets out of Bedlam. They could see nothing brewing around them, but death, and disaster, and desolation, and pillage, and national bankruptcy,— our brave Hielanders, with their heads shot off, lying on the bloody field of battle, all slaughtered to a man, our sailors, hand-cuffed and shackled, musing in French prison on the by-past days of Camperdown, and of Lord Rodney breaking through the line, with all their fleets sunk to the bottom of the salt sea, after being raked fore and aft with chain-shot, and our timber, sugar, tea, and treacle merchants, all fleeing for safety and succour down to lodgings in the Abbey-strand, with a yellow stocking on the ae leg, and a black one on the other, like a wheen mountebanks. Little could they foresee, with their spentacles of prophecy, that a battle of Waterloo would ever be fought, to make the confounded 'fugies draw in their horns, and steik up their scraighing gabs for ever.

I do not pretend to be a politician,—having been

bred to the tailoring line syne ever I was a callant, and not seeing the Adverteezer Newspapers, or the Edinburgh Evening Courant, save and except at an orra time,—so I shall say no more, nor pretend to be one of the thousand-and-one wise men able and willing to direct his Majesty's Ministers on all matters of importance regarding Church or State. One thing, howsoever, I trust I ken, and that is, my duty to my King, as his loyal subject, to old Scotland, as her unworthy son, and to my family, as their prop, support, and breadwinner;—so I shall stick to all three (under Heaven) as long as I have a drop of blood in my precious veins. But the truth is—and I will let it out and shame the de'il—that I could not help making these general observations, (as Maister Wiggie calls the spiritualeezing of his discourses,) as what I have to relate might well make my principles suspected, were they not known to all the world to be as firm as the foundations of the Bass Rock. Ye shall nevertheless judge for yourselves.

It was sometime in the blasty month of March, the weather being rawish and rainy, with sharp frosty nights that left all the window-soles whitewashed over with frost-rind in the mornings, that, as I was going out in the dark, before lying down in my bed, to give a look into the hen-house door, and lock the coal-cellar, so that I might hang the bit key on the nail behind our room window-shutter, I happened to give a keek in, and, lo and behold! the awful ap-

parition of a man with a yellow jacket, lying sound asleep on a great lump of parrot-coal, in a corner!

In the first hurry of my terror and surprise, at seeing a man with a yellow jacket and a blue foraging-cap in such a situation, I was like to drop the good twopenny candle, and faint clean away; but, coming to myself in a jiffie, I determined, in case it might be a highway robber, to thraw about the key, and, running up for the firelock, shoot him through the head instantly, if found necessary. In turning round the key, the lock, being in want of a feather of oil, made a noise, and wakened the poor wretch, who, jumping to the soles of his feet in despair, cried out in a voice that was like to break my heart, though I could not make out one word of his paraphernally. It minded me, by all the world, of a wheen cats fuffing and fighting through ither, and whiles something that sounded like "Sugar, sugar, measure the cord," and "dabble dabble." It was worse than the most outrageous Gaelic ever spoken in the height of passion by a Hieland shearer.

"Oho!" thinks I, "friend, ye cannot be a Christian from your lingo, that's one thing poz; and I would wager tippence your a Frenchy. Who kens, keep us all, but ye may be Bonaparte himself in disguise, come over in a flat-bottomed boat, to spy the nakedness of the land. So ye may just rest content, and keep your quarters good till the morn's morning."

It was a wonderful business, and enough to happen to a man in the course of his lifetime, to find Mounseer from Paris in his coal-neuk, and have the enemy of his country snug under lock and key; so, while he kept rampaging, fuffing, stamping, and *diabbling* away, I went in, and brought out Benjie, with a blanket rowed round him, and my journeyman, Tommy Staytape,—who being an orphan, I made a kind of parlour-boarder of, he sleeping on a shake-down beyond the kitchen fire—to hold a consultation, and be witness of the transaction.

I got my musket, and Tommy Staytape armed himself with the goose, a deadly weapon, whoever may get a clour with it, and Benjie took the poker in one hand and the tongs in the other; and out we all marched briskly, to make the Frenchman, that was locked up from the light of day in the coal-house, surrender. After hearkening at the door for a while, and finding all quiet, we gave a knock to rouse him up, and see if we could bring anything out of him by speering him cross-questions. Tommy and Benjie trembled from top to toe, like aspen leaves, but fient a word could we make common sense of at all. I wonder who educates these foreign creatures? it was in vain to follow him, for he just gab-gabbled away, like one of the stone-masons at the tower of Babel. At first I was completely bamboozled, and almost dung stupid, though I kent

one word of French which I wanted to put to him, so I cried through, "Canna you speak Scotcha, Mounseer?"

He had not the politeness to stop and make answer, but just went on with his string of haivers, without either rhyme or reason, which we could make neither top, tail, nor main of.

It was a sore trial to us all, putting us to our wit's end, and how to come on was past all visible comprehension; when Tommy Staytape, giving his elbow a rub, said, "'Od, maister, I wager something, that he's broken loose frae Pennicuick. We have him like a rotten in a fa'."

On Pennicuick being mentioned, we heard the foreign creature in the coal-house groaning out, "och" and "ohone," and parbleu," and Mysie Rabble,"—that I fancy was his sweetheart at home, some bit French quean, that wondered he was never like to come from the wars and marry her. I thought on this, for his voice was mournful, though I could not understand the words; and kenning he was a stranger in a far land, my bowels yearned within me with compassion towards him.

I would have given half-a-crown, at that blessed moment, to have been able to wash my hands free of him; but I swithered, and was like the cuddie between the two bundles of hay. At long and last a thought struck me, which was to give the deluded simple creature a chance of escape; reckoning that,

if he found his way home, he would see the shame and folly of fighting against us any more; and, marrying Mysie Rabble, live a contented and peaceful life, under his own fig and bay tree. So, wishing him a sound sleep, I cried through the door, "Mounseer, gooda nighta;" decoying away Benjie and Tommy Staytape into the house. Bidding them depart to their beds, I said to them, after shutting the door, "Now, callants, we have the precious life of a fellow creature in our hand, and to account for. Though he has a yellow jacket on, and speaks nonsense, yet, nevertheless, he is of the same flesh and blood as ourselves. Maybe we may be all obliged to wear green foraging-caps before we die yet! Mention what we have seen or heard to no living soul; for maybe, if he were to escape, we would be all taken up on suspicion of being spies, and hanged on a gallows as high as Haman."—After giving them this wholesome advice, I despatched them to their beds like lamplighters, bidding them to never fash their thumbs, but sleep like tops, as I would keep a sharp look-out till morning.

As soon, howsoever, as I heard them sleeping, and playing on the pipes through their noses, I cried first "Tommy," and syne "Benjie," to be sure; and, glad to receive no answer from either, I went to the aumrie and took out a mutton-bone, gey sair pyked, but fleshy enough at the mouse-end; and, putting a penny row beside it, crap out to the coal-

house on my tiptaes. All was quiet as pussie,—so I shot them through the hole at the corner made for letting the gaislings in by; and giving a tirl, cried softly through, "Halloa, Mounseer, there's your suppera fora youa; for I dara saya you are yauppa."

The poor chiel commenced again to grunt and grane, and groan and yelp, and cry ohone;—and make such woeful lamentations, that heart of man could not stand it; and I found the warm tears prap-prapping to my een. Before being put to this trial of my strength, I thought that, if ever it was my fortune to forgather with a Frenchman, either him or me should do or die; but, i'fegs, one should not crack so crouse before they are put to the test; and, though I had taken a prisoner without fighting at all,—though he had come into the coal-house of the Philistines of his own accord as it were, and was as safe as the spy in the house of Rahab at Jericho,—and, though we had him, like a mouse beneath a firlot, snug under custody of lock and key, yet I considered within myself, with a pitiful consideration, that, although he could not speak well, he might yet feel deeply; that he might have a father and mother, and sisters and brothers, in his ain country, weeping and wearying for his return; and that his truelove Mysie Rabble might pine away like a snapped flower, and die of broken heart.

Being a volunteer, and so one of his Majesty's confidential servants, I swithered tremendously between my duty as a man and a soldier; but, do what you like, nature will aye be uppermost. The scale weighed down to the side of pity. I hearkened to the scripture that promises a blessing to the merciful in heart, and determined, come of it what would, to let the Frenchy take his chance of falling into other hands.

Having given him a due allowance by looking at my watch, and thinking he would have had enough of time to have taken his will of the mutton-bone in the way of pyking, I went to the press and brought out a bottle of swipes, which I also shoved through the hole; although, for lack of tanker, there being none at hand, he would be obliged to lift it to his head, and do his best. To show the creature did not want sense, he shoved when he was done the empty plate and the toom bottle through beneath the door, mumbling some trash or other, which no living creature could comprehend, but which, I dare say, from the way it was said, was the telling me how much he was obliged for his supper and lodging. From my kindness towards him, he grew more composed; but as he went back to the corner to lie down, I heard him give two three heavy sighs.—I could not thol't, mortal foe though the man was of mine, so I gave the key a canny thraw

round in the lock, as it were by chance; and, wishing him a good night, went to my bed beside Nanse.

At the dawn of day, by cock-craw, Benjie and Tommy Staytape, keen of the ploy, were up and a-stir, as anxious as if their life depended on it to see that all was safe and snug, and that the prisoner had not shot the lock. They agreed to march sentry over him, half an hour the piece, time about, the one stretching himself out on a stool beside the kitchen fire, by way of a bench in the guard-house, while the other went to and fro like the ticker of a clock. I dare say they saw themselves marching him, after breakfast time, with his yellow jacket, through a mob of weans, with glowring een and gaping mouths, up to the Tolbooth.

The back window being up a jink, I heard the two confabbing. "We'll draw cuts," said Benjie, "which is to walk sentry first; see, here's two straws, the longest gets the choice." "I've won," cried Tommy; "so gang you in a while, and, if I need ye, or grow frightened, I'll beat leather-typatch wi my buckles on the back-door. But we had better see first what he is about, for he may be howking a hole through aneath the foundations; thae fiefs can work like moudiewards."—"I'll slip forret," said Benjie, "and gie a peep."—"Keep to a side," cried Tommy Staytape, "for, dog on it, Moosey'll maybe hae a pistol; and, if his birse be

up, he would think nae mair o' shooting ye as dead as a mawk, than I would do of taking my breakfast."

"I'll rin past, and gie a knock at the door wi' the poker to rouse him up?" asked Benjie.

"Come away then," answered Tommy, "and ye'll hear him gie a yowl, and commence gabbling like a goose."

As all this was going on, I rose and took a vizzy between the chinks of the window-shutters; so, just as I got my neb to the hole, I saw Benjie, as he flew past, give the door a drive. His consternation, on finding it flee half open, may be easier imagined than described; especially, as on the door dunting to again, it being soople in the hinges, they both plainly heard a fistling within. Neither of them ever got such a fleg since they were born; for, expecting the Frenchman to bounce out like a roaring lion, they hurried like mad into the house, couping the creels over one another, Tommy spraining his thumb against the back door, and Benjie's foot going into Tommy's coat pocket, which it carried away with it, like a cloth sandal.

At the noise of this stramash, I took opportunity to come fleeing down the stair, with the gun in my hand; in the first place, to show them I was not frightened to handle firearms; and, in the second, making pretence that I thought it was Mounseer with his green foraging-cap, making an attempt at

housebreaking. Benjie was in a terrible pickle; and, though his nose was blooding with the drive he had come against Tommy's teeth, he took hold of my arm like grim death, crying, "Take tent, faither, take tent; the door is open, and the Pennicuicker hiding himself behind it. He'll brain some of us with a lump of coal."

I jaloused at once that this was nonsense; judging that, by all means of rationality, the creature would be off and away like lightning to the sea-shore, and over to France in some honest man's fishing-boat, down by at Fisherrow; but to throw stoure in the een of the two callants, I loaded with a wheen draps in their presence; and warily priming the pan, went forward with the piece at full-cock.

Tommy and Benjie came behind me, while, pushing the door wide open with the muzzle, as I held my finger at the tricker, I cried, "Stand or be shot;" when young Cursecowl's big ugly mastiff-dog, with the bare mutton-bone in its teeth, bolted through between my legs like a fury, and with such a force as to heel me over on the braid of my back, while I went a dunt on the causeway that made the gun go off, and riddled Nanse's best washing-tub in a manner that laid it on the superannuated-list as to the matter of holding in water. The goose, that was sitting on her eggs, among clean straw, in the inside of it, was also rendered a lamiter for life.

What became of the French vagrant was never

seen or heard tell of, from that day to this. Maybe he was catched, and, tied neck and heels, hurried back to Pennicuick, as fast as he left it; or maybe—as one of the Fisherrow oyster-boats was amissing next morning—he succeeded in giving our brave fleets the slip, and rowing night and day against wind and tide, got home in a safe skin: but this is all matter of surmise,—nobody kens.

On making search in the coal-house, at our leisure afterwards, we found a boxful of 'things with' black dots on them, some with one, some with two, and four, and six, and so on, for playing at an outlandish game they call the dominoes. It was the handiwork of the poor French creature, that had no other Christian employment, but making these and such like, out of sheep-shanks and marrow-bones. I never liked gambling all my life, it being contrary to the Ten Commandments; and mind of putting on the back of the fire the old pack of cards, with the Jack of trumps among them, that the deboched journeymen tailors, in the shop with me in the Grassmarket, used to play birkie with when the maister's back was turned. This is the first time I have acknowledged the transaction to a living soul; had they found me out at the time, my life would not have been worth a pinch of snuff. But as to the dominoes, considering that the Frenchy must have left them as a token of gratitude, and as the only payment in his power for a bit comfortable supper,

it behoved me—for so I thought—not to turn the wrong side of my face altogether on his present, as that would be unmannerly towards a poor stranger.

Nevertheless and notwithstanding all these reasons, the dominoes, after everything that can be said of good anent them, were a black sight, and for months and months produced a scene of riot and idleset after working hours, that went far to render our housie, that was before a picture of decorum and decency, a tabernacle of confusion, and a hell upon earth. Whenever time for stopping work came about, down we regularly all sat, night after night, the wife, Benjie, Tommy Staytape, and myself, playing for a ha'penny the game, and growing as anxious, fierce, and keen about it, as if we had been earning the bread of life. After two three months' trial, I saw that it would never do, for all subordination was fast coming to an end in our bit house, and, for lack of looking after, a great number of small accounts for clouting elbows, piecing waistcoats, and mending leggins, remained unpaid; a great number of wauf customers crowding about us, by way of giving us their change, but with no intention of ever paying a single fraction. The wife, that used to keep everything bein and snug, behaving herself like the sober mother of a family, began to funk on being taken through hands, and grew obstrapulous with her tongue. Instead of following my directions—who was his born maister in the cutting and shaping

line—Tommy Staytape pretended to set up a judgment of his ain, and disfigured some plowmen's jackets in a manner most hideous to behold; while, to crown all, even Absalom, the very callant Benjie, my only bairn, had the impudence to contradict me more than once, and began to think himself as clever as his father. Save us all! it was a terrible business, but I determined, come what would, to give it the finishing stitch.

Every night being worse than another, I did not wait long for an opportunity of letting the whole of them ken my mind, and that, whenever I chose, I could make them wheel to the right about. So it chanced, as we were playing, that I was in prime luck, first rooking the one and syne the other, and I saw them twisting and screwing their mouths about as if they were chewing bitter aloes. Finding that they were on the point of being beaten roup and stoup, they all three rose up from the chairs, crying with one voice, that I was a cheat.—An elder of Maister Wiggie's kirk to be called a cheat! Most awful!!! Flesh and blood could not stand it, more 'especially when I thought on who had dared to presume to call me such; so, in a whirlwind of fury I swept up two nievefuls of dominoes off the table, and made them flee into the bleezing fire; where, after fizzing and cracking like a wheen squeebs, the whole tot, except about half-a-dozen, which fell into the porritch-pot which was

on boiling at the time, were reduced to a heap of grey azles. I soon showed them who was the top of the tree, and what they were likely to make of undutiful rebellion.

So much for a Mounseer's legacy; being in a kind of doubt, whether, according to the riot act and the articles of war, I had a clear conscience in letting him away, I could not expect that any favour granted at his hands was likely to prosper. In fighting, it is weil kent to themselves and all the world, that they have no earthly chance with us; so they are reduced to the necessity of doing what they can, by coming to our firesides in sheep's clothing, and throwing ram-pushion among the family broth. They had better take care that they do not get their fingers scadded.

Having given the dominoes their due, and washed my hands free of gambling I trust for evermore, I turned myself to a better business, which was the going, leaf by leaf, back through our bit day-book, where I founda tremendous sowd of wee outstanding debts. I daresay, not to tell a lee, there were fifty of them, from a shilling to eighteen-pence, and so on; but small and small reckoned up by simple addition, amount to a round sum; while, to add to the misery of the matter, I found we were entangling ourselves to work to a wheen ugly customers, skemps that had not wherewithal to pay lawful debts, and downright rascals, raggamuffins, and ne'er-do-weels.

According to the articles of indenture, drawn up between me and Tommy Staytape, by Rory Sneckdrawer, the penny-writer, when he was bound a 'prentice to me for seven years, I had engaged myself to bring him up to be a man of business. Though now a journeyman, I reckoned the obligation still binding; so, tying up two dockets of accounts with a piece of twine, I gave one parcel to Tommy and the other to Benjie, telling them, by way of encouragement, that I would give them a penny the pound for what silver they could bring me in by hook or crook.

After three days toil and trouble, wherein they mostly wore their shoon off their feet, going first up one closs, and syne down another, up trap-stairs to garrets, and ben long trances that led into dirty holes,—what think ye did they collect? Not one bodle—not one coin of copper! This one was out of work;—and that one had his house-rent to pay;—and a third one had an income in his nose;—and a fourth was bedridden with rheumatics;—and a fifth one's mother's auntie's cousin was dead;—and a sixth one's good-brother's nevoy was going to be married come Martymas;—and a seventh one was away to the back of beyond to see his granny in the Hielands; and so on. It was a terrible business, but what wool can ye get by clipping swine?

The only rational answers I got were two; one of them Geggie Trotter, a natural simpleton, told

Tommy Staytape, "that, for part-payment, he would give me a prime leg of mutton, as he had killed his sow last week."—And what, said I to Benjie, did Jacob Truff the grave digger tell ye by way of news? "He just bad me tell ye, faither, that hoo could ye expect he cou'd gie ye onything, till the times grew better, as he hadna buried a living soul in the kirk-yard, for mair nor a fortnight."

CHAPTER XXIII.

BENJIE ON THE CARPET.

It's no in titles, nor in rank—
It's no in wealth, like Lon'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
It's no in making muckle *mair*—
It's no in books—it's no in lear,
To make us truly blest.

BURNS.

IT is a most wonderful thing to the eye of a philosopher, to make observation how youth gets up, notwithstanding all the dunts and tumbles of infancy—to say nothing of the spaining-brash and the teeth-cutting; and to behold the visible changes that the course of a few years produces. Keep us all! it seemed but yesterday to me, when Benjie, a wee bit smout of a wean, with long linty locks and docked petticoats, toddled but and ben, with a coral gum-stick tied round his waist with a bit knittin; and now, after he had been at Dominie Thresh'em's for four years, he had learned to read Barrie's Collection almost as well as the master could do for his lugs; and was up to all manner of accounts, from simple

addition and the multiplication-table, even to vulgar fractions, and all the lave of them.

At the yearly examination of the school-room by the Presbytery and Master Wiggie, he aye sat at the head of the form, and never failed getting a clap on the head and a wheen carvies. They that are fathers will not wonder that this made me as proud as a peacock; but when they asked his name, and found whose son he was, then the matter seemed to cease being a business of wonder, as nobody could suppose that an only bairn, born to me in lawful wedlock, could be a dult. Folk's cleverness—at least I should think so—lies in their pows; and, that allowed, Benjie's was a gey droll one, being of the most remarkable sort of a shape ye ever saw; but, what is more to the purpose both here and hereafter, he was a real good-hearted callant, though as gleg as a hawk and as sharp as a needle. Everybody that had the smallest gumption prophesied that he would be a real clever one; nor could we grudge that we took pains in his rearing—he having been like a suckling-turkey, or a hot-house plant, from far away, delicate in the constitution—when we saw that the debt was likely to be paid with bank-interest, and that, by his uncommon cleverality, the callant was to be a credit to our family.

Many and long were the debates between his fond mother and me, what trade we would breed him up to; for the matter now became serious, Benjie being

in his thirteenth year; and, though a wee bowed in the near leg, from a suppleness about his knee-joint, nevertheless as active as a hatter, and fit for any calling whatsoever under the sun. One thing I had determined in my own mind, and that was, that he should never with my will go abroad. The gentry are no doubt philosophers enough to bring up their bairns like sheep to the slaughter, and despatch them as cadies to Bengal and the Cape of Good Hope, as soon as they're grown up; when, lo and behold, the first news they hear of them is in a letter, sealed with black wax, telling how they died of the liver complaint, and were buried by six blacks two hours after.

That was one thing settled and sealed, so no more need be said about it; yet, notwithstanding of Nanse's being satisfied that the spaewife was a deceitful gipsy, perfectly untrustworthy, she would aye have a finger in the pie, and try to persuade me in a coaxing way. "I'm sure," she would say, "ane with half an ee may see that our son Benjie has just the physog of an admiral. It's a great shame contradicting nature."

"Po, po," answered I, "woman, ye dinna ken what ye're saying. Do ye imagine that, if he were made a sea-admiral, we could ever live to have any comfort in the son of our bosom? Would he not, think ye, be obliged with his ship to sail the salt seas, through foul weather and fair; and, when he

meet the French, to fight, hack and hew them down, lith and limb, with grape-shot and cutlass; till some unfortunate day or other, after having lost a leg and an arm in the service, he is felled as dead as a door-nail, wi' a cut and thrust over the crown, by some furious rascal that saw he was off his guard, glowring wi' his blind ee another way?——Ye speak haivers, Nanse; what are a' the honours of this world worth? No worth this pinch of snuff I have between my finger and thumb—no worth a bodle, if we never saw our Benjie again, but he was aye ranging and rampaging far abroad, shedding human blood; and when we could only aye dream about him in our sleep, as one that was wandering night and day blindfold, down the long, dark, lampless avenue of destruction, and destined never more to visit Dalkeith again, except with a wooden stump and a brass virl, or to have his head blown off his shoulders, mast high, like ingan peelings, with some exploding earthquake of combustible gunpowder.—Ca' in the laddie, I say, and see what he wad like to be himsell."

Nanse ran but the house, and straightway brought Benjie, who was playing at the bools, ben by the lug and horn. I had got a glass, so my spirit was up. "Stand there," I said; "Benjie, look me in the face, and tell me what trade ye would like to be."

"Trade?" answered Benjie, "I would like to be a gentleman."

Dog on it, it was more than I could thole, and I saw that his mother had spoiled him; so, though I aye liked to give him wholesome reproof rather than lift my hand, I broke through this rule in a couple of hurries, and gave him such a yerk in the cheek with the loof of my hand, as made, I'm sure, his lugs ring, and sent him dozing to the door like a peerie.

"Ye see that," said I, as the laddie went ben the house whinging; "ye see what a kettle o' fish ye have made o't?"

"Weel, weel," answered Nanse, a wee startled by my strong, decisive way of managing, "ye ken best, and, I fancy, maun tak' the matter your ain way. But ye can hae nae earthly objection to making him a lawer's advocatt?"

"I wad see him hanged first," answered I. "What! do you imagine I would set a son of mine to be a sherry-offisher, ganging about rampaging through the country, taking up fiefs and robbers, and suspicious characters wi' wauf looks and waur claes; exposed to all manner of evil communication from bad company, in the way o' business; and rouping out puir creatures that canna find wherewithal to pay their lawful debts, at the Cross, by warrant o' the Sherry, wi' an auld chair in ae hand,

and an eevery hammer in the ither. Siccan a sight wad be the death o' me."

"What think ye then o' the preaching line?" asked Nanse.

"The preaching line!" quo' I—"No, no, that'll never do. Not that I want respect for ministers, who are the servants of the Most High; but the truth is, that unless ye have great friends and patronage of the like of the Duke down by, or the Marquis of Lothian up by, or sic like, ye may preach yoursell as hoarse as a corbie, from June to January, before ony body will say, 'hae, puir man, there's a kirk.' And if no kirk casts up—which is mair nor likely—what can a young probationer turn his hand to? He has learned no trade, so he can neither work nor want. He daurna dig nor delve, even though he were able, or he would be hauled by the cuff of the neck before his betters in the General Assembly, for having the impudence to go for to be so bold as dishonour the cloth; and though he may get his bit orra half-a-guinea whiles, for holding forth in some bit country kirk, to a wheen shepherds and their dogs, when the minister himsell, staring with the fat of gude living and little wark, is lying ill of a bile fever, or has the gout in his muckle tae, yet he has aye the miseries of uncertainty to encounter, his coat grows bare in the cuffs, greasy in the neck, and brown between the shouthers; his jaw-bones

get long and lank, his een sunk, and his head grey wi' vexation, and what the wise Solomon calls 'hope deferred;' so at long and last, friendless and pennyless, he takes the incurable complaint of a broken heart, and is buried out of the gate, in some bit strange corner of the kirk-yard."

"Stop, stop, gudeman," cried Nanse, half greeting, "that's an awfu' business; but I daursay it's ower true. But mightna we breed him a doctor? It seems they have unco profits, and, as he's sae clever, he might come to be a graduit."

"Doctor!" answered I—"Kay, kay, let that flee stick i' the wa'; it's a' ye ken about it. If ye was only aware of what doctors had to do and see, between dwining weans and crying wives, ye would have thought twice before ye let that out. How do ye think our callant has a heart within him to look at folk blooding like sheep, or to sew up cutted throats with a silver needle and silk thread, as I would stitch a pair of trowsers; or to trepan out pieces of cloured skulls, filling up the hole with an iron plate; and pull teeth, maybe the only ones left, out of auld women's heads, and so on, to say nothing of rampaging with dark lanterns, and double-tweel dreadnoughts, about gousty kirk-yards, among humlock and long nettles, the haill night over, like spunkie—shoving the dead corpses, winding sheets and all, into corn-sacks, and boiling their bones, after

they have dissected a' the red flesh off them, into a big caldron, to get out the marrow to make drogs of?"

"Eh, stop, stop, Mansie!" cried Nanse, holding up her hands.

"Na," continued I, "but it's a true bill—it's as true as ye are sitting there. And do ye think that any earthly compensation, either gowpins of gowd by way of fees, or yellow chariots to ride in, with a black servant sticking up behind, like a sign over a tobacconist's door, can ever make up for the loss of a man's having all his feelings seared to iron, and his soul made into whinstone, yea, into the nether-millstone, by being art and part in sic dark and devilish abominations? Go away wi' siccan downright nonsense. Hearken to my words, Nanse, my dear. The happiest man is he that can live quietly and soberly on the earnings of his industry, pays his day and way, works not only to win the bread of life for his wife and weans, but because he kens that idleset is sinful, keeps a pure heart towards God and man; and caring not for the fashion of this world, departs from it in the hope of going, through the merits of his Redeemer, to a better."

"Ye are right after a'" said Nanse, giving me a pat on the shouther; and finding who was her master as well as spouse—"Ill wad it become me to gang for to gie advice to my betters. Tak' your

will of the business, gudeman; and if ye dinna mak' him an Admiral, just mak' him what ye like."

Now is the time, thought I to myself; to carry my point, finding the drappikie I had taken with Donald M'Naughton, in settling his account for the green jacket, still working in my noddle, and giving me a power of words equal to Mr. Blouster the Cameronian preacher,—now is the time, for I still saw the unleavened pride of womankind wambling within her, like a serpent that has got a knock on the pow, and been cast down but not destroyed; so, taking a hearty snuff out of my box, and drawing it up first one nostril, then another, syne dighting my finger and thumb on my breek-knees, "What think ye," said I, "of a sweep? Were it not for getting their faces blacked like savages, a sweep is not such a bad trade after a'; though, to be sure, going down lums six stories high, head foremost, and landing upon the soles of their feet upon the hearth-stone, like a kittlin, is no just so pleasant." Ye observe, it was only to throw cold water on the unthrifty flame of a mother's pride that I said this, and to pull down uppishness from its heathenish temple in the heart, head foremost. So I looked to her, to hear how she would come on.

"Haivers, haivers," said Nanse, birsing up like a cat before a colley. "Sweep, say ye? I would

sooner send him up wi' Lunardi to the man of the moon; or see him banished, shackled neck and heels, to Botany Bay."

"A weel, a weel," answered I, "what notion have ye of the packman line? We could fill his box with needles and prins, and tape, and hanks of worsted, and penny thimbles, at a small expense; and, putting a stick in his hand, send him abroad into the wide world to push his fortune."

The wife looked dumbfoundered. Howsoever—"Or breed him a rowley-poley man," continued I, "to trail about the country frequenting fairs; and dozing thro' the streets selling penny cakes to weans, out of a basket slung round the neck with a leather strap, and parliaments, and quality, brown and white, and snaps well peppered, and gingerbread nits, and so on. The trade is no a bad ane, if creatures would only learn to be careful."

"Mansie Wauch, Mansie Wauch, hae ye gane out o' yere wuts," cried Nanse,—"are ye really serious?"

I saw what I was about, so went on without pretending to mind her.—"Or what say ye to a penny-pie-man? I'fegs, it's a cozy birth, and ane that gars the cappers birl down. What's the expense of a bit daigh, half an ounce weight, pirled round wi' the knuckles into a case, and filled half full o' salt and water, wi' twa or three nips o' braxy floating about in't? Just naething ava;—and consider on a

winter night, when ice-shockles are hinging from the tiles, and stomachs relish what is warm and tasty; what a sale they can get, if they go about jingling their little bell, and keep the genuine article! Then ye ken in the afternoon, he can show that he has two strings to his bow; and have a wheen cookies, either new baked for ladies' tea-parties, or the yesterday's auld shopkeepers' het up i' the oven again,—which is all to the purpose."

"Are ye really in your seven natural senses,—or can I believe my ain een?—I could almost imagine some warlock had thrown glamour into them," said Nanse, staring me broad in the face.

"Take a good look, gudewife, for seeing's believing," quo' I; and then continued, without drawing breath or bridle, at full birr—

"Or if the baking line does not please ye, what say ye to binding him regularly to a man-cook? There he'll see life in all its variorums. Losh keep us a', what an insight into the secrets of roasting, brandering, frying, boiling, baking, and brewing—nicking of geese's craigs—hacking the necks of dead chickens, and cutting out the tongues of leeving turkeys. Then what a steaming o' fat soup in the nostrils! and siccan a collection o' fine smells, as would persuade a man that he could fill his stomach thro' his nose! No weather can reach such cattle: it may be a storm of snow, twenty feet deep, or an even-down pour of rain, washing the very cats off the

house tops; when a weaver is shivering at his loom, with not a drop of blood at his finger nails, and a tailor like myself, so numb with cauld, that instead of driving the needle thro', the claith, he brogs it thro' his ain thumb—then, fient a hair care they: but, standing beside a ranting, roaring, parrot-coal fire, in a white apron, and a gingham jacket, they pour sauce out of ae pan into another, to suit the taste of my lord this, and my lady that, turning, by their legerdemain, fish into fowl, and fowl into flesh; till, in the long run, man, woman, and wean, a' chew and champ away, without kenning more what they are eating than ye ken the day ye'll dee, or whether the Witch of Endor wore a demity falderal, or a manco petticoat."

"Weel," cried Nanse, half rising to go ben the house, "I'll sit nae langer to hear ye gabbling nonsense like a magpie. Mak Benjie what ye like; but ye'll mak me greet the een out o' my head."

"Hooly and fairly," said I; "Nanse, sit still like a woman, and hear me out;" so, giving her a pat on the shoulder, she sat her ways down; and I resumed my discourse.

"Ye've heard, gudewife, from Benjie's own mouth, that he has made up his mind to follow out the trade of a gentleman;—who has put such outrageous notions in his head I'm sure I'll not pretend to guess at. Having never myself being above daily bread, and constant work—when I could get it—I

dare not presume to speak from experience; but this I can say, from having some acquaintances in the line, that, of all easy lives, commend me to that of a gentleman's gentleman. It's true he's caa'd a flunky, which does not sound quite the thing; but what of that? what's in a name? pugh! it does not signify a bawbee—no, nor that pinch of snuff: for, if we descend to particulars, we're all flunkies together, except his Majesty on the throne.—Then William Pitt is his flunky—and half of the House of Commons are his flunkies, doing what he bids them, right or wrong, and no daring to disobey orders, not for the hair in their heads—then the Earl waits on my Lord Duke—Sir Something waits on my Lord Somebody —and his tenant, Mr. so and so, waits on him—and Mr. so and so has his butler—and the butler has his flunky—and the shoeblack brushes the flunky's jacket—and so on. We all hang at one another's tails like a rope of ingans—so ye observe, that any such objection, in the sight of a philosopher like our Benjie, would not weigh a straw's weight.

"Then consider, for a moment,—just consider, gudewife, what company a flunky is every day taken up with, standing behind the chairs, and helping to clean plates and porter; and the manners he cannot help learning, if he is in the smallest gleg in the uptake, so that, when out of livery, it is the toss up of a halfpenny whether ye find out the difference between the man and the master. He learns, in fact,

everything. He learns French,—he learns dancing, in all its branches,—he learns how to give boots the finishing polish,—he learns how to play at cards, as if he had been born and bred an Earl,—he learns, from pouring the bottles, the names of every wine brewed abroad,—he learns how to brush a coat, so that, after six months' tear and wear, one without spectacles would imagine it had only gotten the finishing stitch on the Saturday night before; and he learns to play on the flute, and the spinnet, and the piano, and the fiddle, and the bagpipes; and to sing all manner of songs, and to skirl, full gallop, with such a pith and birr, that though he was to lose his precious eye-sight with the smallpox, or a flash of forked lightning, or fall down a three-story stair dead drunk, and smash his legs to such a degree that both of them required to be cut off, above the knees, half an hour after, so far all right and well—for he could just tear off his shoother-knot, and make a perfect fortune—in the one case, in being led from door to door by a ragged laddie, with a string at the button-hole, playing, 'Ower the Border,' 'The Hen's March,' 'Donald M'Donald,' 'Jenny Nettles,' and such like grand tunes, on the clarinet; or, in the other case, being drawn from town to town, and from door to door, on a hurdle, like a lord, harnessed to four dogs of all colours, at the rate of two miles in the hour, exclusive of stoppages.—What say ye gudewife?"

Nanse gave a mournful look, as if she was fright-

ed I had grown demented, and only said, "Tak' your ain way, gudeman; ye'se get your ain way for me, I fancy."

Seeing her in this Christian state of resignation, I determined at once to hit the nail on the head, and put an end to the whole business as I intended. "Now, Nanse," quo' I, "to come to close quarters wi' ye, tell me candidly and seriously what ye think of a barber? Every one must allow it's a canny and cozie trade."

"A barber that shaves beards!" said Nanse. "'Od, Mansie, ye're surely gaun gyte. Ye're surely joking me a' the time?"

"Joking!" answered I, smoothing down my chin, which was geyan rough,—"Joking here or joking there, I should not think the settling of an only bairn, in an honourable way o' doing for all the days of his natural life, is any joking business. Ye dinna ken what ye're saying, woman. Barbers! i'fegs, to turn up your nose at barbers; did ever living hear such nonsense; but to be sure, one can blame nobody if they speak to the best of their experience. I've heard tell of barbers, woman, about London, that rode up this street, and down that other street, in coaches and four, jumping out to every one that halloo'd to them, sharping razors both on stone and strap, at the ransom of a penny the pair; and shaving off men's beards, whiskers and all, stoop and roop, for a three-ha'-pence. Speak of barbers! it's

all ye ken about it. Commend me to a safe employment, and a profitable. They may give others a nick, and draw blood, but catch them hurting themselves. They are not exposed to colds and rheumatics, from east winds and rainy weather; for they sit, in white aprons, plaiting hair into wigs for auld folks that have bell-pows, or making false curls for ladies that would fain like to look smart in the course of nature. And then they go from house to house, like gentlemen in the morning; cracking with Maister this, or Madam that, as they soap their chins with scented-soap, or put their hair up in marching order either for kirk or playhouse. Then, at their leisure, when they're not thrang at home, they can pare corns to the gentry, or give plowmen's heads the bicker-cut for a penny, and the hair into the bargain, for stuffing chairs with; and between us, who knows—many rottener ship has come to land—but that some genty Miss, fond of plays, poems, and novels, may fancy our Benjie, when he is giving her red hair a twist with the torturing irons, and run away with him, almost whether he will or not, in a stound of unbearable love!"

Here making an end of my discourse, and halting to draw breath, I looked Nanse broad in the face, as much as to say, "Contradict me if you daur," and, "What think ye of that now?"—The man is not worth his lugs that allows his wife to be maister; and being by all laws, divine and human, the head

of the house, I aye made a rule of keeping my putt good. To be candid, howsoever, I must take leave to confess, that Nanse being a reasonable woman, gave me but few opportunities of exerting my authority in this way. As in other matters, she soon came, on reflection, to see the propriety of what I had been saying and setting forth. Besides, she had such a motherly affection towards our bit callant, that sending him abroad would have been the death of her.

To be sure, since these days—which, alas, and woe's me! are not yesterday now, as my grey hair and wrinkled brow but too visibly remind me—such ups and downs have taken place in the commercial world, that the barber line has been clipped of its profits and shaved close, from patriotic competition among its members, like all the rest. Among other things, hair-powder, which was used from the sweep on the lum-head to the king on the throne, is only now in fashion with Lords of Session, and valy-de-shambles; and pig-tails have been cut off from the face of the earth, root and branch. Nevertheless, as I have taken occasion to make observation, the foundations of the cutting and shaving line are as sure as that of the everlasting rocks; beards being likely to roughen, and heads to require polling, as long as wood grows and water runs.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SERIOUS MUSINGS.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
  My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in mine ears
  Which in those days I heard.
Thus fares it still in our decay;
  And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
  Than what it leaves behind.

WORDSWORTH.

After consultation with friends, and much serious consideration on such a momentous subject, it having been finally settled on between the wife and myself to educate Benjie to the barber and hair-cutting line, we looked round about us in the world for a suitable master to whom we might intrust our dear laddie, he having now finished his education, and reached his fourteenth year.

It was visible in a twinkling to us both that his apprenticeship could not be gone through with at home, in that first-rate style which would enable

him to reach the top of the tree in his profession; yet it gave us a sore heart to think of sending away, at so tender an age, one who was so dear to his mother and me, and whom we had, as it were, in a manner made a pet of; so we reckoned it best to article him for a twelvemonth with Ebenezer Packwood at the corner, before finally sending him off to Edinburgh, to get his finishing in the wig, false-curl, and hair-baking department under Urquhart, Maclaughlan, or Connal. Accordingly, I sent for Eben to come and eat an egg with me—matters were entered upon and arranged—Benjie was sent on trial; and, though at first he funked and fought refractory, he came, to the astonishment of his master and the old apprentice, in less than no time, to cut hair without many visible shear-marks; and, within the first quarter, succeeded, without so much as drawing blood, to unbristle, for a wager of his master's, the Saturday night's countenance of Daniel Shoebrush himself, who was as rough as a badger.

Having thus done for Benjie, it now behoved me to have an eye towards myself; for, having turned the corner of manhood, I found that I was beginning to be wearing away down the hill-side of life. Customers, who had as much faith in me as almost in their Bible, with regard to everything connected with my own department, and who could depend on their cloth being cut according to the newest and most approved fashions, began now and then to re-

turn a coat upon my hand for alteration, as being quite out of date; while my daily work, to which in the days of other years I had got up blithe as the lark, instead of being a pleasure, came to be looked forward to with trouble and anxiety, weighing on my heart as a care, and on my shoulders as a burden.

Finding but too severely that such was the case, and that there is no contending with the course of nature, I took sweet counsel together with James Batter over a cup of tea and a cookie, concerning what it was best for a man placed in my circumstances to betake himself to.

As industry ever has it own reward, let me without brag or boasting be allowed to state, that, in my own case, it did not disappoint my exertions. I had sat down a tenant, and I was now not only the landlord of my own house and shop, but of all the back-tenements to the head of the garden, as also of the row of one-story houses behind, facing to the loan, in the centre of which Lucky Thompson keeps up the sign of the Tankard and Tappit Hen. It was also a relief to my mind, as the head of my family, that we had cut Benjie loose from his mother's apron-string, poor fellow, and set him adrift in an honest way of doing to buffet the stormy ocean of life; so, every thing considered, it was found that enough and to spare had been laid past by Nanse and me to spend the evening of our days by the lound dyke-side of domestic comfort.

In Tommy Bodkins, to whom, I trust, I had been a dutiful, as I know I was an honoured master, I found a faithful journeyman, he having served me in that capacity for nine years; so it is not miraculous, being constantly during that period under my attentive eye, that he was now quite a deacon in all the departments of the business. As an eident scholar he had his reward; for customers, especially during the latter years, when my sight was scarcely so good, came at length to be not very scrupulous as to whether their cloth was cut by the man or his master. Never let filial piety be overlooked:—when I first patronized Tommy, and promoted him to the dignity of sitting cross-legged along with me on the working-board, he was a hatless and shoeless raggamuffin, the orphan lad of a widowed mother, whose husband had been killed by a chain-shot, which carried off his head, at the bloody battle of the Nile, under Lord Nelson. Tommy was the oldest of four, and the other three were lasses, that knew not in the morning where the day's providing was to come from, except by trust in him who sent the ravens to Elijah. By allowing Tommy a trifle for board-wages, I was enabled to add my mite to the comforts of the family, for he was kind, frugal, and dutiful, and would willingly share with them to the last morsel. In the course of a few years he became his mother's bread-winner, the lasses being sent to service. I myself having recommended one

of them to Deacon Burlings, and another to Spring-heel the dancing-master; retaining Katie, the youngest, for ourselves, to manage the kitchen, and go messages when required.

Providence having thus blessed Tommy's efforts in the paths of industrious sobriety, what could I do better—James Batter being exactly of the same opinion—than make him my successor, giving him the shop at a cheap rent, the stock in trade at a moderate valuation, and the good will of the business as a gratis gift.

Having recommended Tommy to public patronage and support, he is now, as all the world knows, a thriving man; nor, from Berwick Bridge to Johnny Groat's, is it in the power of any gentleman to have his coat cut in a more fashionable way, or on more moderate terms, than at the sign of the Goose and the Pair of Shears rampant.

Leaving Tommy to take care of his own matters, as he is well able to do, allow me to observe, that it is curious how habit becomes a second nature, and how the breaking in upon the ways we have been long and long accustomed to through the days of the years that are past, is as the cutting asunder of the joints and marrow. This I found bitterly, even though I had the prospect before me of spending my old age in peace and plenty. I could not think of leaving my auld house—every room, every nook in it was familiar to my heart. The garden trees seem-

ed to wave their branches sorrowfully over my head, as bidding me a farewell; and when I saw all the scraighing hens catched out of the hen-house I had twenty years before built and tiled with my own hands, and tumbled into a sack, to be carried on limping Jock Dalgleish's back up to our new abode at Lugton, my heart swelled to my mouth, and the mist of gushing tears bedimmed my eye-sight. Four of Thomas Burlings' flour carts stood laden before the door with our furniture, on the top of which were three of Nanse's grand geraniums in flower-pots, with five of my walking-sticks tied together with a string; and, as I paced through the empty rooms, where I had passed so many pleasant and happy hours, the sound of my feet on the bare floor seemed in my ears like an echo from the grave. On our road to Lugton I could scarcely muster common sense to answer a person who wished us a good day; and Nanse, as we daundered on, arm-in-arm, never once took her napkin from her een. Oh, but it was a weary business!

Being in this sober frame of mind, allow me to wind up this chapter—the last catastrophe of my eventful life that I mean at present to make public—with a few serious reflections; as it fears me, that, in much of what I have set down, ill-natured people may see a good deal scarcely consistent with my character for douceness and circumspection; but if many wonderfuls have fallen to my share, it would

be well to remember, that a man's lot is not of his own making.

Musing within myself on the chances and changes of time, the uncertainties of life, the frail thread by which we are tacked to this world, and how the place that now knows us shall soon know us no more, I could not help, for two or three days previous to my quitting my dear old house and shop, taking my stick into my hand, and wandering about all my old haunts and houffs—and need I mention that among these were the road down to the Duke's south-gate with the deers on't, the water-side by Woodburn, the Cow-brigg, up the back street, through the flesh-market, and over to the auld kirk in among the headstones. For three walks, on three different days, I set out in different directions; yet, strange to say! I aye landed in the kirkyard:—and where is the man of woman born proud enough to brag, that it shall not be his fate to land there at last?

Headstones and headstones around me! some newly put up, and others mossy and grey; it was a humbling yet an edifying sight, preaching, as forcibly as ever Maister Wiggie did in his best days, of the vanity and the passingness of all human enjoyments. Mouldered to dust beneath the turfs lay the blithe laddies with whom I have a hundred times played merry games on moonlight nights; some were soon cut off; others grew up to their full estate; and

there stood I, a grey-haired man, among the weeds and nettles, mourning over times never to return!

The reader will no doubt be anxious to hear a few words regarding my son Benjie, who has turned out just as his friends and the world expected. After his time with Ebenezer Packwood in Dalkeith, he served for four years in Edinburgh, where he cut a distinguished figure, having shaved and shorn lots of the nobility and gentry; among whom was a French duchess, and many other foreigners of distinction. In short, nothing went down at the principal hotels but Mr. Benjamin the barber; and, had he been so disposed, he could have commenced on his own footing, with every chance of success; but knowing himself fully young, and being anxious to see more of the world before settling, he took out a passage in one of the Leith smacks, and set sail for London, where he arrived, after a safe and prosperous voyage, without a hair of his head injured. The only thing that I am ashamed to let out about him is, that he is now, and has been for some time past, principal shopman in a Wallflower, Hair-powder, and Genuine Macassar Oil Warehouse, kept by three Frenchmen, called Moosies Peroukey.

But, though our natural enemies, he writes me, that he has found them agreeable and chatty masters, full of good manners, and pleasant discourse, first-rate in their articles, and, except in their language, almost Christians.

I aye thought Benjie was a genius; and he is beginning to shew himself his father's son, being in thoughts of taking out a patent for making hair-oil from rancid butter. If he succeeds it will make the callant's fortune. But he must not marry Madamoselle Peroukey without my especial consent, as Nanse says, that her having a Frenchwoman for her daughter-in-law would be the death of her.

CONCLUSION.

He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man, and bird, and beast.—
He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.

COLERIDGE.

ON first commencing this memoir of my life, I put pen to paper with the laudable view of handing down to posterity—to our children, and to their children's children—the accidents, adventures, and mischances that may fall to the lot of a man, placed by providence even in the loundest situation of life, where he seemed to lie sheltered in the bield of peace and privacy;—and, at that time, it was my intention to have carried down my various transactions to this 'dividual day and date. My materials, however, have swelled on my hand like summer corn under sunny showers; one thing has brought another to remembrance; crowds of byepast marvels have come before my mind's eye in the silent watches of the night, concerning the days when I sat work-

ing cross-legged on the board; and if I do not stop at this critical juncture—to wit, my retiring from trade, and the settlement of my dear and only son Benjie in an honourable way of doing; as who dares to deny that the barber and hair-cutting line is a safe and honourable employment?—I do not know when I might get to the end of my tether; and the interest, which every reasonable man must take in the extraordinary adventures of my early years, might be grievously marred and broken in upon through the garrulity of old age.

Perhaps I am going a little too far when I say, that the whole world cannot fail to be interested in the occurrences of my life; for, since its creation, which was not yesterday, I do not believe—and James Batter is exactly of the same mind—that there ever was a subject concerning which the bulk of mankind have not had two opinions. Knowing this to be the case, I would be a great gomeril to expect that I should be the only white swan that ever appeared; and that all parties in church and state, who are for cutting each others throats on every other great question, should be unanimous only in what regards me. Englishmen, for instance, will say that I am a bad speller, and that my language is kittle; and such of the Irishes as can read will be threaping that I have abused their precious country; but, my certie, instead of blaming me for letting out what I could not deny, they must just learn to behave themselves better when they come to see us, or bide at home.

Being by nature a Scotchman—being I say of the blood of Robert Bruce and Sir William Wallace,—and having in my day and generation buckled on my sword to keep the battle from our gates in the hour of danger, ill would it become me to speak but the plain truth, the whole truth, and any thing but the truth. No, although bred to a peaceable occupation, I am the subject of a free king and constitution; and, if I have written as I speak, I have just spoken as I thought. The man of learning that kens no language saving Greek, and Gaelic, and Hebrew, will doubtless laugh at the curiosity of my dialect; but I would just recommend him, as he is a philosopher, to consider for a wee, that there are other things, in mortal life and in human nature, worth a moment's consideration, besides old Pagan Heathens—pot-hooks and hangers—the asses' bridge and the weary walls of Troy; which last city, for all that has been said and sung about it, would be found, I would stake my life upon it, could it be seen at this moment, not worth half a thought, when compared with the New Town of Edinburgh. Of all towns in the world, however, Dalkeith for my money. If the ignorant are dumbfoundered at one of their own kidney—a tailor laddie, that got the feck of his small education leathered into him, at Dominie Thresh'em's school—thinking himself an author, I would just remind them that seeing is believing; and that they should keep up a good heart, as it is impossible to say what may yet be their own fortune

before they die.—The rich man's apology I would beg, if, in this humble narrative, in this detail of manners almost hidden from the sphere of his observation, I have in any instance tramped on the tender toes of good breeding, or given just offence in breadth of expression, or vulgarity of language. Let this, however be my apology, that the only value of my wonderful history consists in its being as true as death—a circumstance which it could have slender pretensions to had I coined stories, or coloured them to please my own fancy and that of the world. In that case it would have been very easy for me to have made a Sinbad the Sailor's tale out of it--to have shewn myself up a man, such as the world has never seen except on paper—to have made Cursecowl behave like a gentleman, and the Frenchman from Pennicuick crack like a Christian. And to the poor man, him whom the wise disposer of all events has seen fit to place in a situation similar to that in which I have been placed, ordaining him to earn daily bread by the labour of his hands and the sweat of his brow, if my adventures shall afford an hour or two's pleasant amusement, when, after working hours, he sits by his bleezing ingle with a bairn on each knee, while his oldest daughter is sewing her seam, and his goodwife with her right foot birls round the spinning-wheel, then my purpose is gained, and more than gained; for it is my firm belief, that no man, who has by head or hand in any way lightened an ounce weight of the

load of human misery, can be truly said to have been unprofitable in his day, or disappointed the purpose of his creation. For what more can we do here below? The God who formed us, breathing into our nostrils the breath of life, is, in his almighty power and wisdom, far removed beyond the sphere of our poor and paltry offices. We are of the clay, and return to the elements from which we were formed. He is a spirit without beginning of days or end of years. The extent of our limited exertions reaches no farther than our belief in and our duty towards Him; which, in my humble opinion, can be best shown by us in our love and charity towards our fellow-creatures—the master work of his hands.

I would not willingly close this record of my life, without expressing a few words of heartfelt gratitude towards the multitude, from whom, in the intercourse of the world, I have experienced good offices; and towards the few, who, in the hour of my trials and adversities, remained with faces towards me steadfast and unalterable, scorning the fickle who scoffed, and the Levite who passed by on the other side. Of old hath it been said, that a true friend is the medicine of life; and in the day of darkness when my heart was breaking, and the world with all its concerns seemed shaded in a gloom never to pass away, how deeply have I acknowledged the truth of the maxim! How shall I repay such kindness? Alas! it is out of my power. But all I can do, I do. I think of it on my pillow at the silent hour of midnight: my heart

burns with the gratitude it hath not—may never have an opportunity of shewing to the world; and I put up my prayer in faith to Him who seeth in secret, that he may bless and reward them openly.

Sorrows and pleasures are inseparably mixed up in the cup set for man's drinking; and the sunniest day hath its cloud. But I have made this observation, that, if true happiness, or any thing like true happiness, is to be found in this world, it is only to be purchased by the practice of virtue. Things will fall out—so it hath been ordained in this scene of trial—even to the best and purest of heart, which must carry sorrow to the bosom, and bring tears to the eyelids: and then, to the wayward and the wicked, bitter is their misery as the waters of Marah. But never can the good man be wholly unhappy; he has that within which passeth shew; the anchor of his faith is fixed on the rock of ages; and when the dark cloud hath glided over—and it will glide—it leaves behind it the blue and unclouded heaven

If, concerning religious matters, a tone of levity at any time seems to infect these pages, I cry ye mercy; for nothing was farther from my intention; yet, though acknowledging this, I maintain that it is a vain thing to look on religion as on a winter night, full of terror, and darkness, and storms. No one, it strikes me, errs more widely than he who supposes that man was made to mourn—that the sanctity of the heart is shewn by the length of the face,—

and that mirth, the pleasant mirth of innocent hearts, is sinful in the sight of Heaven. I'll never believe that. The very sun may appear dim to such folks as choose only to look at him through green spectacles; as by the poor wretch who is dwining in the jaundice, the driven snow could be sworn of as a bright yellow. Such opinions, however, lie between man and his Maker, and are not for the like of us to judge of. For myself I have enjoyed a pleasant run of good health through life, reading my Bible, more in hope than fear; our salvation, and not our destruction, being I should suppose its purpose. So, when I behold bright suns and blue skies, the trees in blossom, and birds on the wing, the waters singing to the woods, and Earth looking like the abode of them who were at first formed but a little lower than the angels, I trust that the overflowing of a grateful heart will not be reckoned against me for unrighteousness.

THE END.

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